XII. LINE OF COMMUNICATION AND T.C. SUPPLY OPERATIONS IN NORTHERN EUROPE, October 1944 to 8 May 1945

The relatively static tactical situation which had developed in western Europe during September 1944 continued to such an extent as to permit the more orderly development of line of communication supply routes. Regular and special motor transport operations increased in number, and during October barge traffic commenced on inland waterways. The greatest development, however, both proportionately to other forms of transportation and relatively to its former accomplishments came in the field of railway traffic. From a total of 355,020 tons of freight moved by the 2nd MRS during September,[1] the amount increased during October to 385,957 tons carried into Paris alone, and for the following month Paris arrivals reached 452,074 tons.[2] A high point in tonnage movement occurred on 15 December, when the total amount dispatched by rail behind the western front reached 50,000 tons. Thereafter, tonnage rates declined because of the German counteroffensive. However, during October 71 percent of all tonnage forwarded from rear areas was carried by railways,[3] and the proportion continued to increase thereafter.

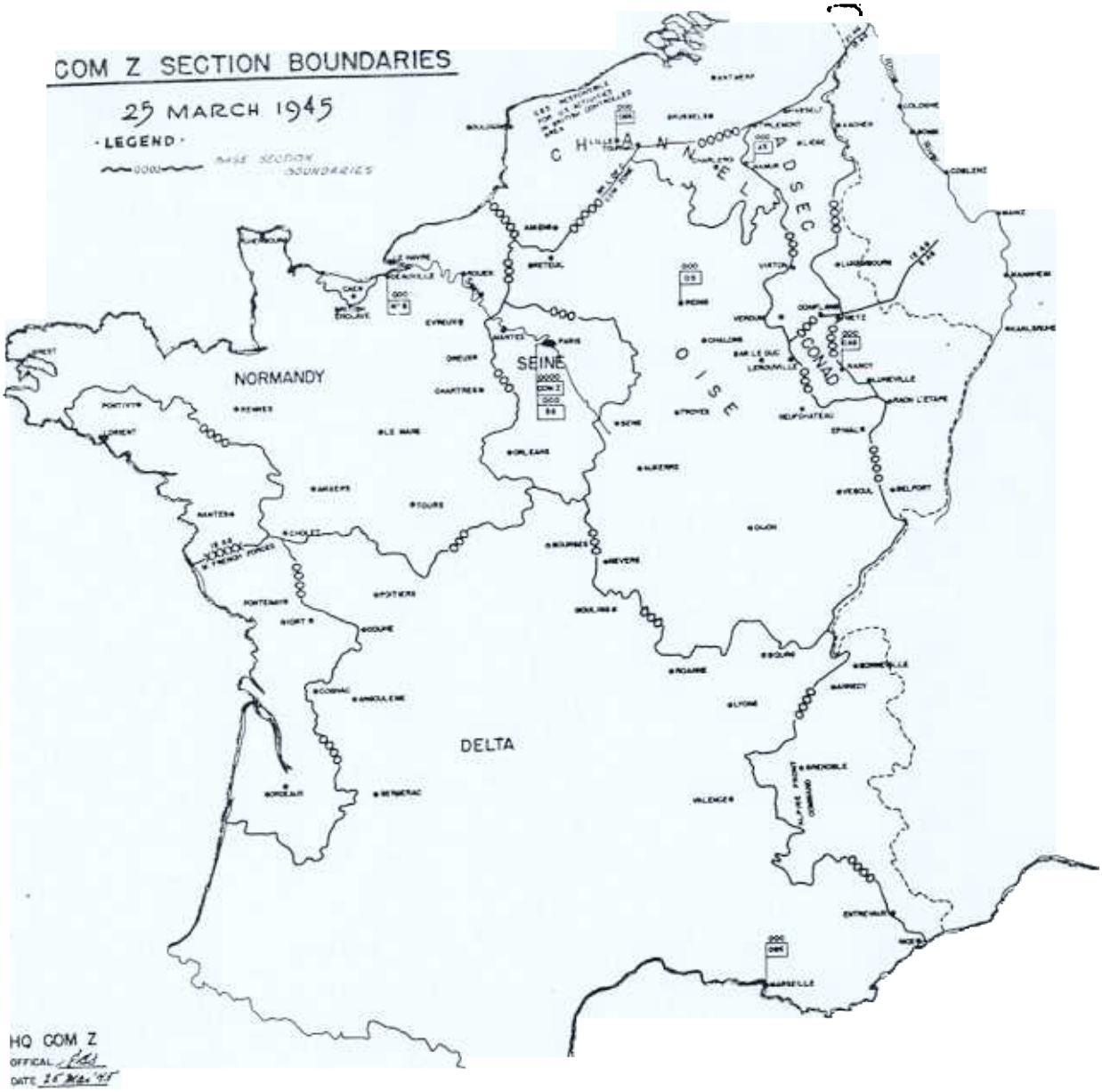
MRS Developments

Contributing to the increase in rail traffic were: the opportunity to effect more orderly and thorough reconstruction of railroad lines; the opening of the ports of Le Havre and Rouen, shortening the distance

1 Consolidated Historical Report on T.C. Activities in the ETO, Annex #8, p. 27.

2 Ibid, p. 32. All but about 5 percent of these totals was delivered to the First and Third Armies.

3 Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #123, p. 13.


COM Z SECTION BOUNDARIES
25 MARCH 1945
· LEGEND ·
BASE SECTION BOUNDARIES
NORMANDY
SEINE
OISE
CONAD
DELTA
HQ COM Z
OFFICIAL
DATE 25 Mar 45

eat zone; the conclusion of agreements which perm can railroad operations in portions of what was Army territory again shortening the rail haul to ental arrival of additional MRS units, loco- lling stock; the recovery of additional Continen- tock and locomotives, followed by their repair and service; the better condition of captured rail lines east of Paris than those west of the city; and the increasing assistance of French a Belgian railroad workers.

The roximately 10,500 2nd MRS personnel operating on the Continent nd of September 1944 were increased to a total of 17,000 by 1 December [4] This personnel was divided among Headquarters, 2nd MRS, 5 railwa grand divisions, 16 railway operating battalions, 4 railway and 6 hospital train platoons. Some reassignment of locati occurred for these units by the end of 1944, but there was no in the number of personnel until the following January. By that time three of the five railway grand divisions, with an appropriate number of railway operating battalions, were assigned to Belgium, while the rest remained in France. As units moved forward, an increasing amount of the lines west of Paris was returned to Phase III operations, is, almost entirely French operation.

By 1945 there was a considerable increase in the mileage of lines laced in operation over the 4,788 miles utilized on 30 September. The principal increase came from opening additional rail lines leading into Paris from the west and running west of Paris, as well as

4 Consolidated Historical Report on T.C. Activities in the ETO, Annex #8, pp. 27 and 34.

opening new lines in northern France and in Belgium. Parenthetically, it may be noted that not all newly opened lines connected with those already in operation, that is, they extended only between two inland points.

The 648 U.S. locomotives (120 of which were Diesel locomotives) received on the Continent by 30 September had been increased to a total of 1,274 (124 Diesel) by 1 December. The number of captured locomotives during the same two months had increased from 1,563 to 2,094.[5] Of this latter total, 1,711 had been returned to the French for Phase III operation and 383 were operated by the 2nd MRS. Rolling stock received from the U.K. had increased from 11,288 to 19,117 units. Captured rolling stock had increased from 19,294 to 28,569, and all of it had been placed in service by 1 December. In addition, 35 hospital trains had been received on the Continent from the U.K. by 1 December, as well as mobile workshops, cranes and other railway equipment.

Agreements with British officials resulted in American operation of rail lines extending through Caen, and in northern France and Bel-

The line through Caen to Lisieux came under 2nd MRS operation on 23 October, thus shortening the route from Normandy to Paris, but included in the agreement under which this operation was carried on was the necessity for handling a certain amount of British freight.[6] The agreement for American railway operations in Belgium led to the assign-

to Antwerp of an Advance Echelon, 2nd MRS, under the command of Colonel G.W. Beeler.[7] The assignment became effective 7 November. The

5 Of the 1,563 recovered by 30 September, 296 were then in use, 495 were considered serviceable and 464 were placed in shops for necessary repairs. Ibid, pp. 27-28.

6 Ibid, p. 28.

7 Ibid, p. 30.

mission of the Advance Echel[illegible]hich later moved to Brussels, was to supervise the planning and development of the port of Antwerp for rail operations, and to coordinate with the Commanding General, ADSEC, the Army staffs and the 21st Army Group, matters of common interest to the U.S. and Great Britain in connection with military railway operations in Belgium and contemplated MRS operations in Germany.

The delay in opening the port of Antwerp caused a postponement from 1 December to 1 January in establishing Phase III operations for all rail lines west of Paris. In the meantime the German counterattack in the Ardennes commenced and caused still further delay in this program. The Ardennes offensive also seriously affected 2nd MRS operations in other ways. The peak rail movement of 15 December was immediately followed by a decline, which brought a low point of only 30,000 tons of freight dispatched on 20 December. Not only were rail car loadings and shipments forward held up pending the outcome of the tactical situation, but freight cars were rushed to the forward areas to load supplies that might have to be evacuated. Furthermore, the stepped-up German bombing and strafing of railway installations and trains on the move resulted in considerable losses of railway equipment and personnel.[8] The V-1 and V-2 bomb raids also created some damage. Despite these losses, it had been reported that "the overall effect was not critically adverse to the movement of trains to vital areas."

During the period December 1944-January 1945, the 2nd MRS established two special railway operations of considerable importance. First was the inauguration in December of a program for the accommodation of

[8] Ibid, p. 33. No 2nd MRS units were involved in "direct contact" with the enemy during the Battle of the Bulge.

leave personnel, principally for movement to the Channel ports for transportation to the U.K.[9] Trains also were set up to carry personnel on leave from the forward areas to Paris, and by February 1945 traffic of this sort had reached considerable proportions. Leave areas were also established in Brussels and in southern France, and with the increase in strength of the U.S. Armies on the Continent, permitting large numbers of personnel to be released for short periods of rest and recreation, a substantial portion of the railway passenger traffic consisted of personnel on leave and furlough.

A second special railway operation was inaugurated in January to carry high priority freight from Cherbourg to Paris and beyond. The operation was intended to be similar to the Red Ball motor express, and it received the title "Toot Sweet Express."[10] Plans were laid to set up the first train on 14 January, but since the technical services were not well organized to take advantage of the train service, and sufficient bids for space were lacking to fill the quota of 350 tons, the first Toot Sweet Express did not leave Cherbourg until 17 January. The plan was to drop some cars at Paris, pick up other cars there, and continue on to Verdun.[11] The service was maintained as regularly as priority cargo was available, and on 30 January its destination was changed to Liege.[12] By 13 March the weekly tonnage had risen to 3,500 tons, which

9 Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #123, p. 18.

10 Ibid, p. 17; Consolidated Historical Report on T.C. Activities in the ETO, Annex #8, pp. 46-47.

11 Ibid, p. 47. This account differs on several points from that found in Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #123, pp. 17-18. For example, the latter states that Namur was the northern destination.

12 Much of this high priority freight was hastened all the way from depots and manufacturers in the U.S., moving to the ports by expedited freight, express and air shipment, crossing the Atlantic on fast ships, and receiving special handling at loading and discharge points.

An ialized service was the operation of hospital
ains, started long before the December-January pe-
numbe of hospital trains brought to the Con-
lovember, en there were 31 present, resulted
ion in the number of casualties moved by rail.
e tot the end of December amounted to 200,000. It
should be oted that hospital trains were under the command of the Chief
Surgeon eater, although technical operation was the responsi-
bility of hief of Transportation.[13] Movement schedules were es-
tablished the OCOT on the basis of requisitions from the Chief Sur-
geon and forwarded to the base section in which the move would originate.
Hospital ns were dispatched over the entire distance without refer-
ence to changes in jurisdiction at various points in the route. Further-
more, unlike leave trains which were required to stop periodically be-
cause th rried no messing arrangements or sanitary facilities, hos-
pital train were fully equipped for through service. Of course, it was
necessary to arrange their movement so as not to interfere with the ship-
ment of military cargo.

One unfortunate development of the last quarter of 1944, which
recei licity during December, January and February, was
the pilferi g of supply trains and the diversion of Army goods into
French black market channels.[14] The blame was placed primarily on one
railway operating battalion which was operating in the Normandy Base Sec-

[13] Ibid, p. 18.

[14] Consolidated Historical Report on T.C. Activities in the ETO, Annex #8, p. 47.

tion. Remedies were sought by withdrawing a battalion of an infantry division to provide train guards, and by punishing the guilty railway troops.[15] By February, 158 enlisted men and two officers were convicted on black market charges.[16] More significant was the fact that stricter supervision of trains and railway installations prevented the recurrence of such malfeasance. The most important railway security problem then became civilian pilfering. By 4 March four MP battalions had been assigned to guard duty on 2nd MRS trains and at installations. About a month previous, as part of a General Headquarters, MRS, policy, a Railway Security Department (Provisional) was activated in 2nd MRS Headquarters to supervise MP activities, and it functioned with beneficial results.[17]

Activation of General Headquarters, MRS

After the Ardennes counteroffensive had been overcome and railway operations returned to "normal", the 2nd MRS began to prepare for the passage of the Armies across the Rhine. At that time the 2nd MRS was supporting the Twelfth Army Group which supervised the First, Third, Ninth and Fifteenth U.S. Armies. In order to provide closer coordination for this support with that of the 1st MRS, supplying the Sixth Army Group by rail from Marseilles, the two MRS headquarters were placed under the control of the previously mentioned General Headquarters, MRS.

15 Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #123, p. 7. Port troops were used to protect freight on trains in the Channel Base Section.

16 N.Y. Times, 23 Feb. 1945.

17 A handicap to efficient railway operations during the early spring of 1945, resulted from a call for service troops to serve as infantry replacements. An unsuccessful effort was made to exempt 2nd MRS personnel, and ultimately approximately 2,000 of them were withdrawn for infantry training.

This General Headquarters was activated 12 February 1945, under the command of Brig. General C.R. Gray, Jr., formerly Director General, 1st MRS. Colonel A.E. Stoddard became the new General Manager, 1st MRS, and Brig. General Burpee remained as General Manager, 2nd MRS

A better understanding of the functions of the General Headquarters, MRS, may be gained by reviewing briefly the differences that had characterized the positions and responsibilities of the commanding officers of the two military railway service headquarters before they were brought under one authority.[18] The Director General, 1st MRS, had been responsible to the Commanding General, SOLOC (and not to the Transportation Officer, SOLOC); he was in command of military railway operations and the administration of all units and personnel assigned or attached to the 1st MRS; he planned for, requisitioned (through the Commanding General, Comzone), stocked and issued all railway track material, repair parts for locomotives and cars, and other railway material through 1st MRS depot companies; he was responsible for the advance planning, development, reconstruction and operation of all military railways in SOLOC territory; and he was charged with the protection and guarding of military stores entrusted to the 1st MRS. In carrying out this latter obligation, the Director General, 1st MRS, had MP units assigned directly to his office.

In contrast, the General Manager, 2nd MRS, was responsible to the Chief of Transportation, Comzone. Second MRS units were placed under the administrative jurisdiction of a base section commander and under the technical control of Headquarters, 2nd MRS; track and bridge mate-

18 Consolidated Historical Report on T.C. Activities in the ETO, Annex #8, pp. 111ff.

rial which it required were handled by the Corps of Engineers; repair parts for locomotives and railway cars, as well as other store items, were handled by the Supply Division, OCOT; reconstruction and rehabilitation of railroads was the responsibility of the theater Chief of Engineers; and protection of military goods in transit was the responsibility of base section commanders.

Certain aspects of the duties and responsibilities of each MRS headquarters were incorporated in the authority provided the General Headquarters, MRS, and the Comzone order establishing it accorded a partially exempt status for the MRS. The Director General was assigned the command of all MRS units and activities on the Continent, under the technical control of the Chief of Transportation.[19] The former also was responsible for the advance planning, development and issue of all railway stock material for ordinary maintenance; the distribution for operational use of all U.S. railway rolling stock and other railroad property that came under the control of the American Army; and authority to order and execute the movement of MRS units, together with the personnel and units attached thereto, within the theater. The administrative responsibility over MRS units, retained by base section commanders, included courts-martial jurisdiction, financial transactions, hospitalization, supply of items of common use, and certain phases of personnel accounting.

Apparently the Comzone order was not sufficiently clear in distinguishing between the Headquarters authority and that of the base section commanders, for an historical report states that the February changes

19 Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #123, p. 4.

were applied as far as practical, it that or the whole the base sections did not recognize them.[20] In any case, on 3 April the standard operating procedure affecting the MRS was revised by Comzone Headquarters, so as to insure a definitely exempt status for General Headquarters, MRS

The Director General, General Headquarters, MRS established his offices in Paris, and in order that 2nd MRS headquarters would be more centrally located for administering the units under its authority it was moved from Paris to Brussels. The move resulted in special communication difficulties, for the area was under British control and Brussels was the location of British 21st Army Group Headquarters.[21] On this account, it was necessary to handle a great many details through the British, with frequent delays in the dispatch and receipt of communications. However, the advantages of central location outweighed the disadvantages of operating in British Army territory.

By 1 April 1945, five of the 14 railway operating battalions then under 2nd MRS jurisdiction operated in France, five in Belgium, one in Holland and three in Germany.[22] Operating in Germany required special security precautions in sending and receiving telegraph and telephone messages, and so initially motor courier service was heavily relied upon. Further advance of the Armies in Germany brought new railway communication problems. Communication lines were found to be severely damaged and extensive repairs were necessary. Again an emergency motor transport courier service was inaugurated, while radio equipment was obtained

20 Consolidated Historical Report on T.C. Activities in the ETO, Annex #8, p. 48.

21 Ibid, pp. 43-44.

22 Ibid, p. 41.

from the Signal Corps, and two small planes were assigned the 2nd MRS.

Additional problems encountered in Germany were insufficient billeting space, inadequate sanitary facilities, inadequate lighting and heating facilities, the necessity for establishing new messes, the use of German civilians for housekeeping duties, and the necessity for security and precautionary measures against sabotage.[23] On the other hand, civilian railroad workers in Germany were more cooperative than the workers in France and Belgium.[24] The reasons were that Germany railway foremen exercised a greater degree of control over their subordinates than did French and Belgian foremen, and political factors played a less prominent part. Incidentally, the Belgian cooperation was considered better than the French.[25]

As MRS units were moved forward during February and March 1945, an increasing number of French lines were placed in Phase III operations.[26] Irrespective of the obvious advantage to the MRS in releasing railway troops for new assignments, there were certain disadvantages inherent in this policy. For instance, French railway officials frequently failed to insure the delivery of locomotives and equipment at specified times and places, as requested by the 2nd MRS. Little was found in the way of corrective measures.[27] For a time, the wages of French railroad workers were withheld, but this proved to be only temporarily effective and it

23 Ibid, p. 42.

24 Ibid, p. 45. A great many of the better trained German railroad workers, however, had been withdrawn with the retreating German Army.

25 Phase II but not Phase III operations were employed extensively in both Belgium and Germany.

26 By the end of March all railroads west of Paris were under Phase III operations.

27 Ibid, p. 45.

offered no real solution to the problem.

Of additional importance [illegible] moving forward railway operating battalions prior to 1 January 1945, it had been the policy of MRS to keep the older and more experienced battalions in advanced positions.[28] Four or five battalions were moved at a time instead of "leap-frogging" rear area battalions to the forward areas. Shifting so large a number of units meant that each battalion had to become adjusted to operating under new conditions and in new territory, whereas if those units located in what formerly had been forward areas had been permitted to remain where they were as long as possible, and those farthest to the rear had been moved ahead of them into newly acquired regions, greater operating efficiency would have obtained in the service as a whole. The validity of the policy of leap-frogging was accepted in January 1945, and adoption of the policy then resulted in an overall improvement in railway operations.

Bridging the Rhine

Initial plans for supporting the combat forces after they had crossed the Rhine River had assigned preference for erecting the first railway bridge at Duisburg, Dusseldorf, Cologne or Wesel, with the latter receiving fourth choice.[29] When the Remagen bridge (south of Cologne) was captured by the First Army on 7 March, steps were taken immediately to exploit the bridge for rail traffic by rehabilitating the approaching rail lines on the west. The collapse of the bridge on 17 March, however, caused a reversion to original blueprints. Within the

28 Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #123, p. 16.

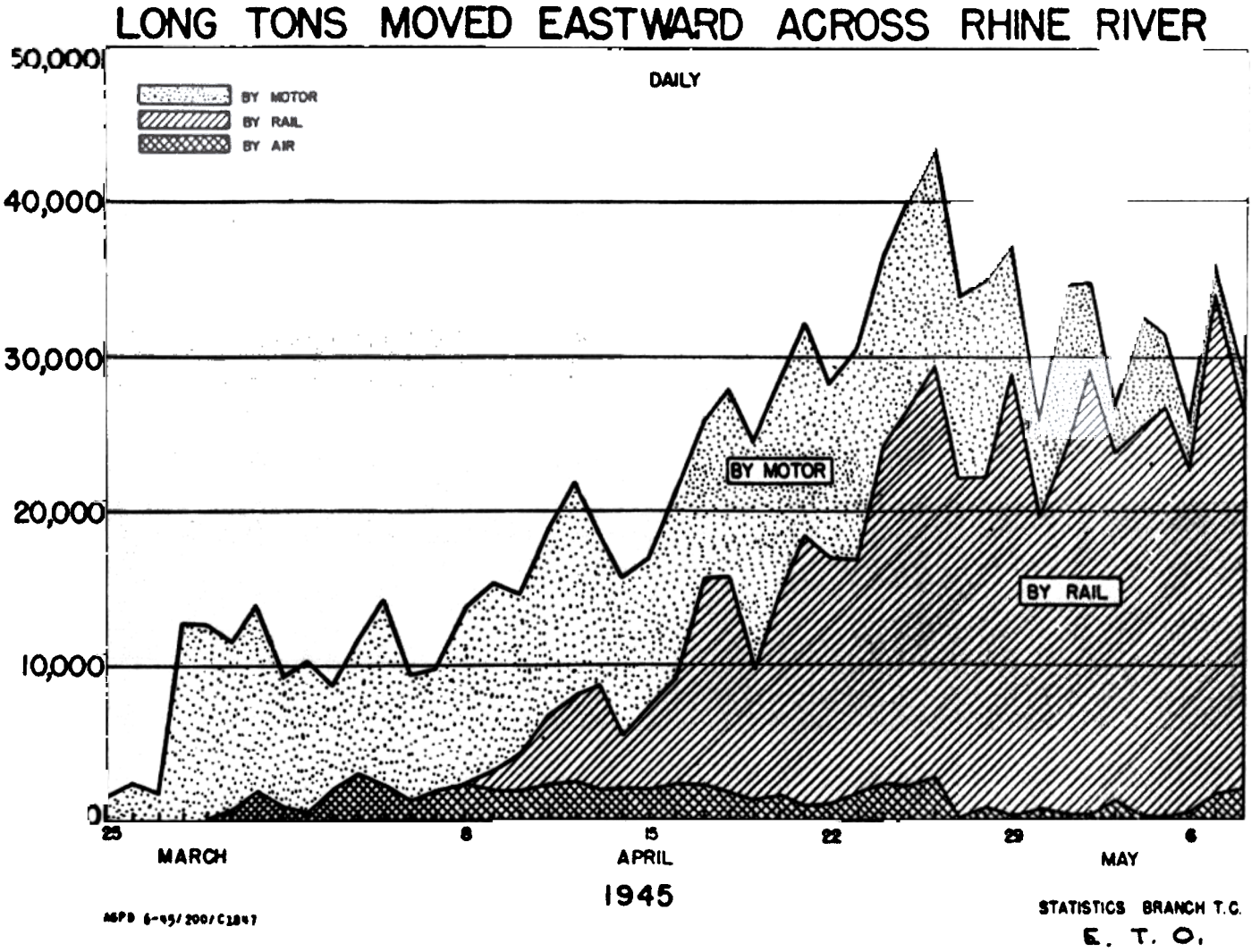
29 Consolidated Historical Report on T.C. Activities in the ETO, Annex #8, p. 53.

ensuing 10 days, the Third and Ninth U.S. Armies and the Second British Army also crossed the Rhine, but the only one of the four locations previously selected which was safely in Allied hands, was Wesel. Consequently, that site was selected for the construction of the first Rhine railroad bridge.

The decision for the location of the bridge was given to the Corps of Engineers close to midnight of 26 March. They rejected a suggestion for rebuilding the destroyed bridge at that point, because of its excessive height and length and the damage suffered by its piers. Instead, they selected a site 500 yards farther upstream, adjacent to the piers and wreckage of a highway bridge that the Germans had started to rebuild as both a highway and railroad bridge. Partially completed approach tracks were available, connecting the site with the Wesel railway yards. At 1800 hours on 29 March the Engineers commenced their construction work, and in the remarkably short space of 10 days 4 hours and 45 minutes (that is, by 8 April) the bridge was declared open for rail traffic.[30]

The construction work involved completion of a 1,752 foot single track span over the Rhine, a fill of 373 feet and a 463 foot bridge over a nearby canal, the laying of approximately two miles of connecting track, and the rearrangement and preparation of yard facilities at Wesel and Buderick. The 708th Railway Grand Division and the 729th Railway Operating Battalion cooperated with the Corps of Engineers in moving

30 Ibid. Newspaper reports state that the construction time was two hours short of 10 days, thus bettering Caesar's record of 10 days. N.Y. Times, 9 Apr. 1945. A radio from the theater, however, states that construction time was 10 days, 5 hours and 15 minutes, and that this surpassed Caesar's time. Radio Cm-In 8375 (10 Apr. 1945) to Lt.Gen. B. Somervell from Gen. D.D. Eisenhower. See also Railway Age, Apr. 28, 1945, pp. 748ff.



railway and construction material forward from rear areas, and providing night and day switching service with six Diesel locomotives operating in the marshalling yards and construction areas. Personnel from the track maintenance companies of two railway operating battalions also were utilized in rearranging and rehabilitating the yard facilities at Wesel and Buderick. Twenty-five minutes after the bridge was declared open, 2nd MRS units drove the first train across the river and moved it east for unloading at Munster.

Within less than a week, that is on 14 April, the 1st MRS also obtained the use of a reconstructed bridge across the Rhine further to the south, at Mainz. Ten days later yet another bridge was opened to rail traffic at Ludwigshafen.[31] Indicative of the speed of the subsequent railway advance into Germany, despite destroyed marshalling yards and sabotaged Diesel locomotives, was the arrival of the first MRS operated train at Nurnberg on 5 May. Moreover, during the three previous days the 1st and 2nd MRS had moved approximately 28,000 long tons of the total of 35,000 tons of cargo transported east of the Rhine River.[32]

The Mainz and the Wesel bridges had been constructed to supply the Third and Ninth Armies respectively.[33] Because of the collapse of the Remagen bridge, the First Army also was supported over the Mainz bridge So many agencies became concerned with the use of the bridges that regulating committees had to be formed to coordinate control of traffic. The

31 Ibid, p. 95.

32 Monthly Progress Report, T.C., ETO, 31 May 1945, Chart 22.

33 Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #123, p. 17. By 9 April the Corps of Engineers had erected across the Rhine more than 40 bridges of various types for traffic other than rail. Radio Cm-In 8375 (10 Apr. 1945) to Lt.Gen. B. Somervell from Gen. D.D. Eisenhower.

greatest difficulty had occurred at the Mainz bridge where representatives of the Regulating Stations supporting the First and Third Armies, the G-4 Section of ADSEC, the District RTO, two railway operating battalions and frequently the Armies, all exercised some sort of movement control before the committees were established.[34]

While the bridge committees were correcting the previous confusion, a shortage of rail cars became acute behind the Mainz bridge, and the latter situation was not corrected until after V-E Day. At one time the excess of loaded over empty cars reached 12,200 units.[35] In order to obtain empty cars to reduce this shortage, it was found necessary to unload captured enemy material from cars returning from forward areas. No provision had been made for storing such material in the area directly west of the River, since car hoarding had not been fully anticipated. It was found expedient, therefore, to improvise unloading organizations, using Q.M. base depot headquarters detachments, assisted by POWs and civilians.

The combined capacity of the Mainz and Wesel bridges had been estimated at 20,000 tons daily, yet as much as 13,590 tons were actually moved over the Mainz bridge, and 16,720 tons over the Wesel bridge on peak load days.[36] The average movement over each bridge was 8,000 tons per day, with the larger portion going over the Wesel structure.

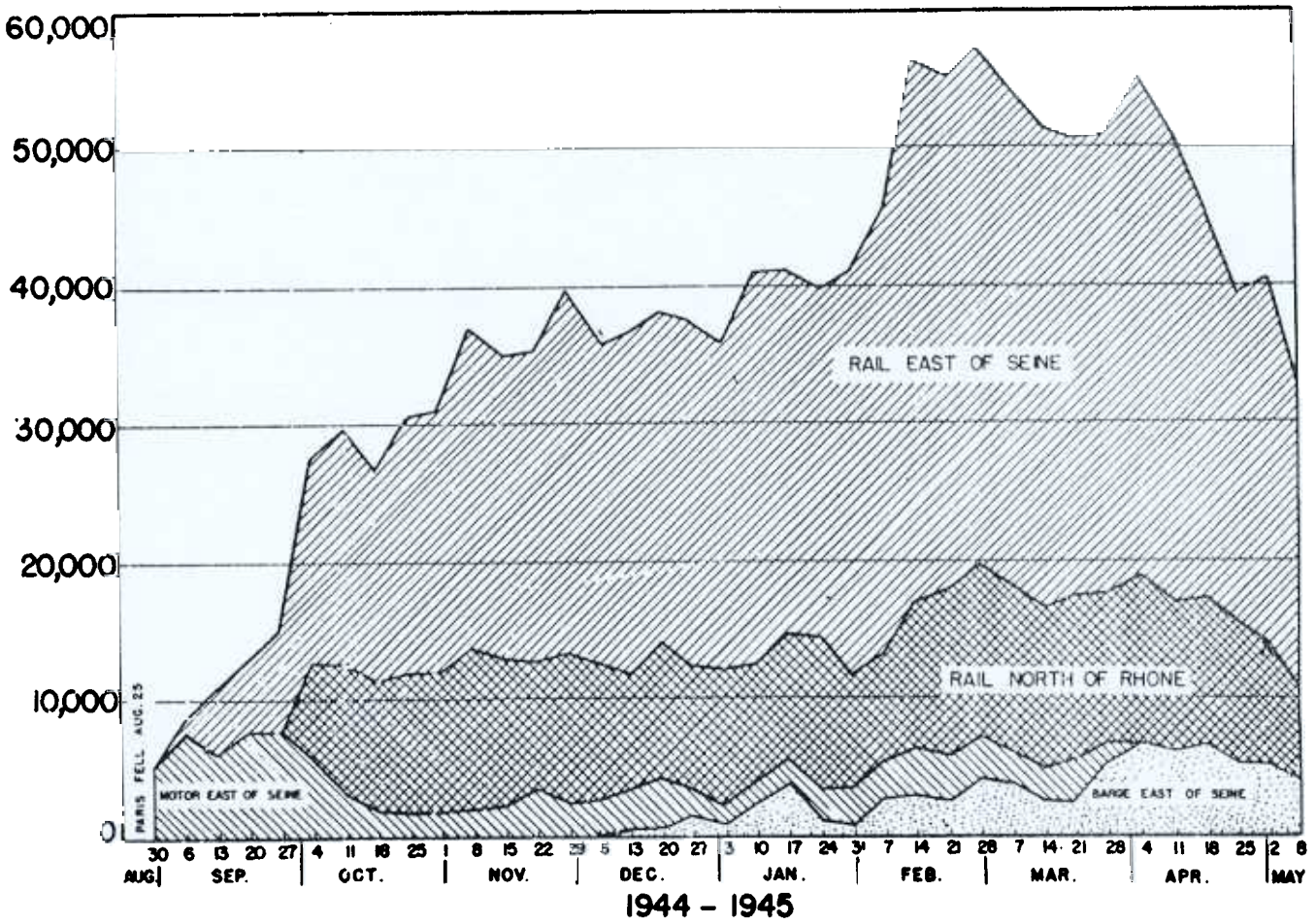
The accomplishment of the 1st and 2nd MRS from September 1944 through 10 May 1945 in the area east of the Seine River and north of the Rhone River is shown on the accompanying chart. The chart illustrates

34 Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #123, p. 25.
35 Ibid, p. 17.
36 Ibid.

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED

TONNAGE MOVED EAST OF THE SEINE AND NORTH OF THE RHONE



FIGURES PLOTTED ARE DAILY AVERAGES FOR THE WEEK ENDING ON DATE SHOWN

STATISTICS BRANCH T.C.
E. T. O.

AGPO 6-45/200/C1847

how the railroads became and then maintained their position as the backbone of land transportation in support of U.S. Armies. The heaviest movements of freight occurred during the period from February through the first part of April 1945. The overall accomplishment of the MRS, with assistance from native civilian railroaders, was even greater than the chart indicates, for there also was considerable rail traffic confined to the area south of the Rhone and west of the Seine.

By V-E Day the MRS units on the Continent consisted of the following: 1 General Headquarters, MRS; 2 Headquarters and Headquarters Company, MRS; 8 railway grand divisions; 24 railway operating battalions; 7 railway shop battalions; 8 M.P. battalions; 2 base depot companies; and 15 railway maintenance units, including special mobile maintenance teams for both general operations and hospital trains.[37] Under the General Headquarters, the 1st and 2nd MRS divided control of the other units, some of which had been reassigned from one to the other, particularly as areas of control shifted. The 2nd MRS Headquarters had remained at Brussels during the latter stages of the campaign, but an Advance Echelon had moved forward behind the advancing Armies, ultimately locating at Brunswick, Germany, by V-E Day. Meanwhile, the 1st MRS Headquarters had moved forward to Strasbourg, France.[38]

According to the Rail Division, OCT, ASF, 1,436 locomotives and 45,357 railway cars of all types (including 21,988 20-ton box cars and 11,690 20-ton gondola cars) were shipped to the ETO prior to 31 July

37 Ibid, p. 5.

38 On 30 April 1945, 2nd MRS Headquarters supervised 3 railway grand divisions; 9 railway operating battalions and 1 railway transportation company; 3 railway shop battalions; 1 railway workshop (mobile); 2 hospital maintenance detachments; 4 M.P. battalions; and 2 base depot companies.

1945.[39] Theater statistics on the amount of equipment received, however, show that 1,987 locomotives and 43,972 railway cars (of which 21,512 were 20-ton box cars and 10,983 were 20-ton gondola cars) had been delivered to the Continent by that date.[40] Some of the discrepancies between these two sets of figures can be explained, but some cannot, from the information available to the author of this monograph.

The receipt of more than 500 locomotives than were shipped to the theater from the U.S. calls to mind the large number that the European Theater received from the North African Theater and from the Persian Gulf Command.[41] No accurate check of the number delivered from the North African Theater is possible at this time, but perhaps the deliveries from that theater in addition to those from the Persian Gulf Command do not account for the difference. It should be noted that 672 British locomotives were received for operating the French railroads, and some of these may have been included in the theater record of receipts.[42] The difference between the number of railway cars shipped to the theater and the number reported received on the Continent would be accounted for if 1,400 of them were retained for use in the U.K. However, available historical records do not suggest that there were such retentions, nor do they indicate the loss of a comparable number from ships sunk while enroute to the theater.

The task of the MRS did not cease with V-E Day, for maintenance and

39 Information from Mr. Paul Brown, Engineering Branch, Rail Division, OCT, ASF.

40 Monthly Progress Report, T.C., USFET, 31 July 1945, Chart 19.

41 U.S. Army Transportation and the Persian Corridor, Monograph #25, Historical Unit, OCT, ASF, p. 191.

42 Allied Aid to France, prepared by Public Relations Division, SHAEF, 2 Mar. 1945, p. 23.

other supplies still had to be carried forward, German railways had to be further rehabilitated for the support of American Army of Occupation, and troops and materiel had to be carried to ports for outloading in the redeployment program. A great deal of MRS time and effort had been devoted to preparing for the occupation of Germany and for the redeployment of the American forces, but those subjects lie outside the scope of this monograph. It is appropriate now to turn to a brief summary of the accomplishments of the Motor Transport Service for the period October 1944 to V-E Day.

Operations of the Motor Transport Service

Although railroads became the backbone of support for the Armies on the Continent of Europe, motor transport operations remained vital for "static" (local) hauling and line of communication operations where railroads were not available. The Motor Transport Service, OCOT, in October 1944 took over technical control of Comzone motor transport operations and received both technical and operational control of certain truck units, that will be noted later. The size of the MTS task may be judged by the fact that whereas 3,598,192 tons of supplies were handled in western France by motor transport through September, by the end of December the cumulative total had reached 9,421,459 tons.[43] Of this total, approximately 1,051,330 tons of supplies were moved on leading line of communication routes, and the rest were accounted for by static operations.

The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Motor Transport Service, that was activated during the first part of October 1944 (confirmed by

[43] History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, p. 70.

written orders of 26 November) was composed of a nucleus of the MTS, OCOT, and personnel from four traffic regulating (or regulation) groups. Three of these groups formerly had been attached to MTS, OCOT, and one had been attached to the Motor Transport Brigade, ADSEC. Incidentally, one of the groups was a WAC contingent. At the end of December 1944, the MTS headquarters was composed of 55 officers and 128 enlisted personnel, distributed, under the Commanding Officer, Colonel R.B. Warren, among Executive, Staff, Status, Operations and Equipment Branches.

The principal tasks which the MTS faced in the last quarter of 1944 included: clarifying with Headquarters Comzone and the base section commanders the meaning of the phrase "operational control and technical supervision"; controlling the operations of a fluctuating number of truck units and supervising and controlling the technical operations of a larger, but also fluctuating, number of like units; maintaining detailed records and charts; conducting inspections of field operations and equipment; recommending changes in policies and procedures; preparing plans for future operations; equipping and supplying the various truck units under its control; and providing for and sponsoring maintenance programs.[44]

The meaning of "operational control and technical supervision" was not cleared up until early in 1945, and up to that time there had been considerable friction between the parties concerned.[45] After March 1945, the administration of Comzone truck units was at all times handled by the base sections. Operational control was handled by the base sections when the haul was within their boundary. If the movement was intersec-

44 Ibid, p. 71.

45 Ibid, Vol. VI, Part 2, Chap. V, p. 1.

tional, however, the MTS had operational control, along with the technical supervision that it maintained under all circumstances. An exception was made in the case of the XYZ operation, which was the motor transport operation in support of the American Armies moving east of the Rhine that will be described later, for there operational control was assumed by the two advance sections, CONAD and ADSEC. This was done to centralize control and assure the most rapid handling possible of the necessary documents, as well as to obtain command and operational control by the same headquarters.

At the end of December 1944 there were 198 truck companies (84 of which also were under operational control) under the technical control of the MTS.[46] This number, as mentioned previously, had been subject to fluctuation during the preceding period (as it was to be later), particularly during the time of the German counteroffensive.[47] The types of vehicles allotted to the 198 truck companies is shown in the following tabulation:[48]

No. of Companies	Type of Vehicle
104	2½-ton standard 6 x 6 trucks
16	2½-ton cab-over-engine trucks
4	6-ton semi-trailers
1	10-ton (animal or cargo) trucks
49	10-ton semi-trailers

46 Ibid, p. 3.

47 During the final quarter of 1944 at various times, the MTS controlled the operations of 4 Q.M. groups; 15 Q.M. battalions and 96 Q.M. truck companies, consisting of 659 officers and 13,890 enlisted men. It also supervised and controlled the technical operations of 10 Q.M. groups; 32 Q.M. battalions; 213 Q.M. truck companies; and 3 Q.M. car companies, consisting of 1,325 officers and 30,488 enlisted men, and possessing approximately 8,000 vehicles. Ibid, Vol. V, Part I, Chap. II, p. 70.

48 Ibid, Vol. V, Part 2, Chap. V, Section I, p. 3.

6	12½-ton semi-trailers
2	45-ton tank transporter trailers
5	750-gallon POL tank trucks
9	2,000-4,000 gallon POL tank trucks
2	Refrigerator trucks

During November it had been possible to push forward the program of re-equipping truck companies originally assigned 2½-ton trucks, with 10-ton truck-tractor semi-trailer combinations. By the end of December, 30 additional truck companies had been re-equipped in this manner. Most of the program was accomplished by sending the truck company personnel to Marseilles, where, prior to 1 January 1945, 1,800 trailers and 690 tractors had arrived directly from the U.S. Marseilles was employed as the receiving port for this equipment, both because it was not subject to the shipping congestion of western Continental ports, and because Com-zone headquarters permitted the T.C. to maintain its own vehicle depot there, without supervision of the Ordnance Service.[49] The origin of this policy has not been explained in available historical reports, but it should be noted that such reports do mention the excellent coopera-tion that obtained between Ordnance and the T.C. in the ETO.

While at Marseilles the truck companies were given a short course in handling the 10-ton combination vehicles, because for most of the per-sonnel it was their first experience in driving such heavy equipment. When the companies were trained and equipped, their vehicles were loaded with cargo destined for advanced areas, and after its delivery, the com-panies returned to their original stations. Most of these companies were later reassigned to the ABC trucking operation, which was based on

[49] Ibid, Vol. VI, Part 2, Chap. V, p. 3.

Antwerp for the support of the First and Ninth U.S. Armies.[50]

At the close of December 1944, the T.C. was authorized to receive an additional 75 Q.M. truck companies for 1945. Thirty of the companies were to be sent from the U.S. and debarked in the U.K. before proceeding to the Continent; 31 were to be received on the Continent direct from the U.S.; and 14 were to arrive from the Persian Gulf Command (PGC), equipped with 10-ton Diesel trucks.[51] Apparently, this program was later revised, for during the first quarter of 1945, only 50 truck companies were received from the U.S., although PGC supplied its 14.[52]

Of the 30 which debarked in the U.K., only one had been trained in the operation of heavier type vehicles, and so it was used for training the other 29. This training was possible because certain ships from the U.S., originally destined for Continental ports, were divered to the U.K., where they discharged enough 10-ton combination vehicles to equip five truck companies. Some of the truck companies originally debarking on the Continent were assigned the operation of 10-ton Diesel trucks, 185 of which had been received at Marseilles from the U.S. prior to 1 January 1945. These units, in contrast to the units which had operated 10-ton Diesel trucks for two years in the PGC, lacked adequate experience with heavy type vehicles, and again a training program was

50 It should be noted that 10-ton truck combinations were also supplied as replacements for casualties to other types of vehicles. Replacements were effected either at Marseilles or at a Motor Transport Pool, operated by the MTS and located near Chartres. Between 1 October and 31 December 1944, a total of 6,550 10-ton combinations replaced or were exchanged for other types of vehicles.

51 Ibid, Vol. V, Part 2, Chap. V, Section I, p. 4.

52 Ibid, Vol. VI, Part 2, Chap. V, p. 3.

necessary at Marseilles.[53]

In addition to supplying new vehicles and training truck unit personnel in driving and preventative maintenance of heavier type vehicles, during the period after October 1944, the MTS was faced with a considerable number of spare parts problems. For example, a shortage of tires and tubes for replacements on T.C. vehicles became acute. While urging greater care in caring for tires, the OCOT also requisitioned 16,053 tires and tubes to alleviate the critical shortage.[54]

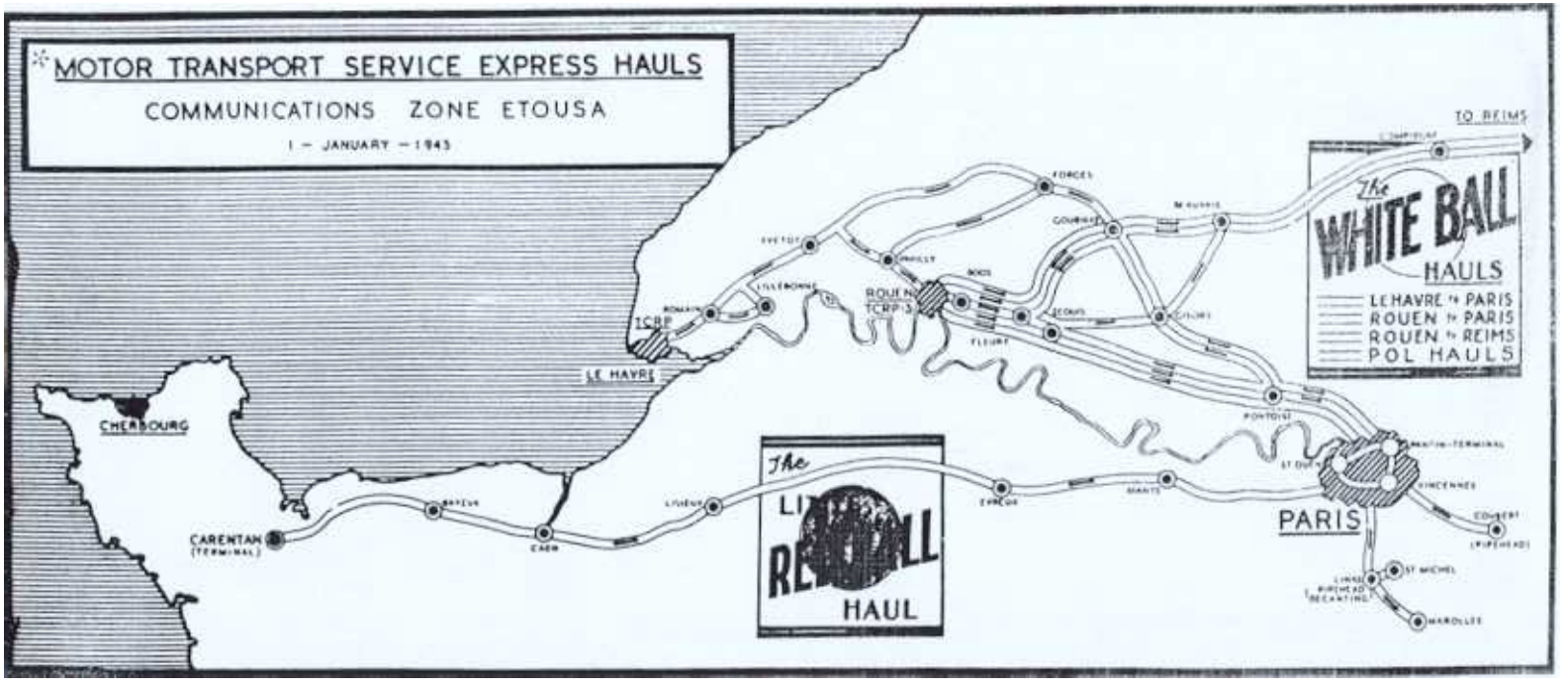
Other vehicle parts and supplies occasionally became scarce. Prestone was required as an anti-freeze for winter driving, and when a short supply developed, alcohol was substituted. But alcohol evaporated quickly when used in heavy duty trucks, causing overheating of engines. Only by constant alertness and maintenance could drivers of such trucks avoid deadlining their vehicles. A supply item of less importance was bicycles, used in checking convoy loads in marshalling yards. Reports indicate that replacement parts for these bicycles were not always readily obtained.

During the first quarter of 1945 the major problem of extended motor vehicle operation was supply parts. Certain deadlined trucks were cannibalized to keep others in operation, but still the number that could

53 The theater needed additional truck companies so greatly that it urged the War Department to ship untrained units as soon as possible and leave the training problem to the theater. Author's interview with Col. R.B. Warren, Motor Transport Service, OCT, ASF. To replace the temporary instruction program of the latter part of 1944, during the first months of 1945, the Status Branch, MTS, OCOT, established a regular driver training school.

54 History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, p. 5.

"White Ball & Little Red Ball"
*MTSE Hauls



not be maintained in operation was high.[55] As the end of the European campaign drew near an increasing number of replacement and supply parts arrived from the U.S., affording welcomed relief to the MTS

Contrary to the normal T.C. supply processes, the procedure for procurement of T.C. truck company supplies was for each unit to requisition directly from Ordnance Service items which it furnished, from Signal Corps for items which it furnished, etc.[56] Where truck companies encountered difficulty in obtaining supplies through Army channels, informed the Equipment Branch, MTS, of their needs. The Equipment Branch then endeavored to procure the necessary items from either local military or civilian sources. This might involve requisitions on the Supply Division, OCOT, but, as indicated, other authorities also could be contacted directly.

The MTS had placed increasing emphasis on preventative maintenance during November 1944. It developed a line of communication maintenance system through the establishment of bivouac areas, which were supervised by Ordnance teams. As a result, the average number of vehicles available to T.C. truck companies rose from about 30 to 35 by the end of December.[57] These facilities were later enlarged and the program intensified in an effort to raise the average to 38, with 40 as the target figure. Although the target was not attained, some increase in the number of available vehicles later became evident.

The efforts of the MTS also were directed toward continuing the

55 Ibid, Vol. VI, Part 2, Chap. V, p. 4. French civilians and later POWs were successfully employed in the bivouac areas for maintenance work.

56 Ibid, Vol. V, Part 2, Chap. V, Section I, p. 6.

57 Each company was equipped with 48 vehicles, a standard number.

program of securing 40 additional drivers as overstrength for each T.C. truck company. By 31 December 1944, 154 companies had received complements of 150 enlisted men each, thus augmenting the regulation number of 110, and the effort to secure additional drivers for other companies continued during the succeeding period.

Another personnel problem concerned replacements for driver casualties. Replacements for T.C. truck companies were obtained from the Ground Force Reinforcement System, but what was described as the "squeeze on manpower" during the winter of 1944-1945 made it difficult to secure all of the replacements that were required. The difficulty might not have been so great if the priority on truck drivers had been raised to the equivalent of replacement personnel for other branches of the service.

Special MTS Operations

Line of communication hauling under the supervision of the Motor Transport Service, OCOT, during the period October 1944 through April 1945 is distinguished by the number of special operations that occurred, the type of service rendered and the amount of cargo transported. Operations, exclusive of the Red Ball, established to effect regular service between more or less fixed destinations and other outstanding over-the-road movements are summarized in the following accounts.[58]

The White Ball operation was started on 6 October 1944 and continued to operate until 10 January 1945. The purpose of this truck route was to clear the ports of Le Havre and Rouen by transferring their ton-

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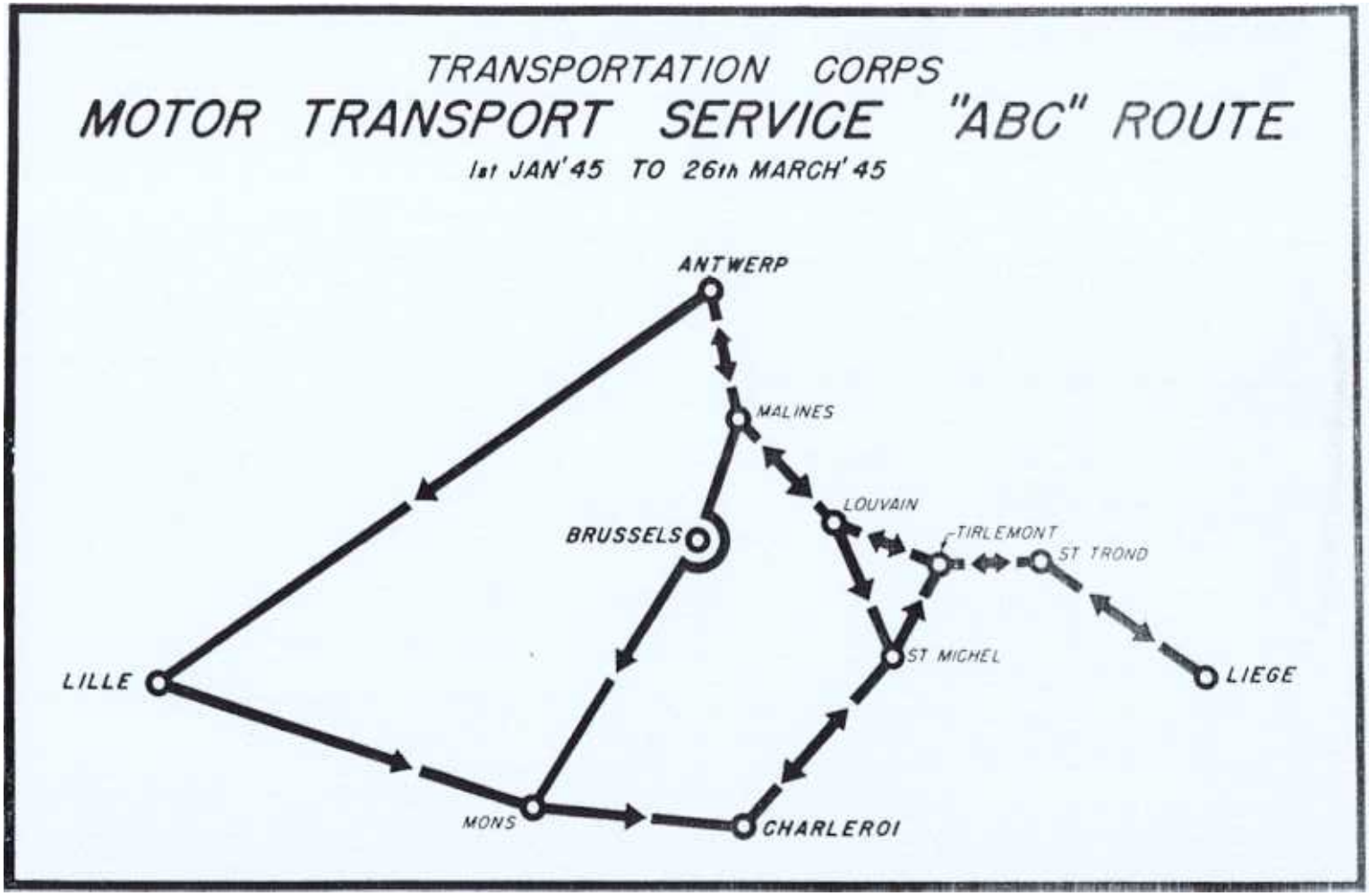

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nage to depots at Paris, Soissons and Reims. Part of the tonnage was transferred to rail at Beauvais and Compeigne. The largest number of truck companies assigned to the haul was 48, and the daily average was 29. During the 97 days that this route operated it hauled 143,067 tons for a daily average of 1,475 tons, an average distance of 113 miles forward.

The purpose of the Little Red Ball, established in December 1944, was to provide a fast delivery service for high priority hauls and it was not intended that it should haul any great tonnage. The normal rail operations for freight movements from Cherbourg to Paris during December required three days while trucks could make the haul in one day. These railroad difficulties were later overcome and they were able to take over the priority hauls, with Little Red Ball passing out of existence. ing the life of this express route, from 15 December 1944 to 18 January 1945, its tonnage target was constantly met, as an average of over tons per day was hauled, with a total tonnage of 3,507. This was performed entirely by one Q.M. Truck Company (TC).

As previously indicated, the ABC Route was organized to transport priority supplies from Antwerp, Belgium, to dumps for the Armies which were pressing hard against the German frontier (see accompanying map). This operation featured the exclusive use of heavy equipment, 4- to 5-ton tractors with 10-ton semi-trailers, and a shuttling method for obtaining loads for semi-trailers at docks and dispatching convoys from a marshalling yard. Operations on the ABC Route started 30 November and ended 24 March 1945 when trucks were reassigned to the XYZ hauls (to be described later) to support the Armies in the final blows against

the enemy. During this period of operation, the ABC Route moved 244,924 tons of supplies in 117 days, with an average of 14 and never more than 16 truck companies assigned to the route.

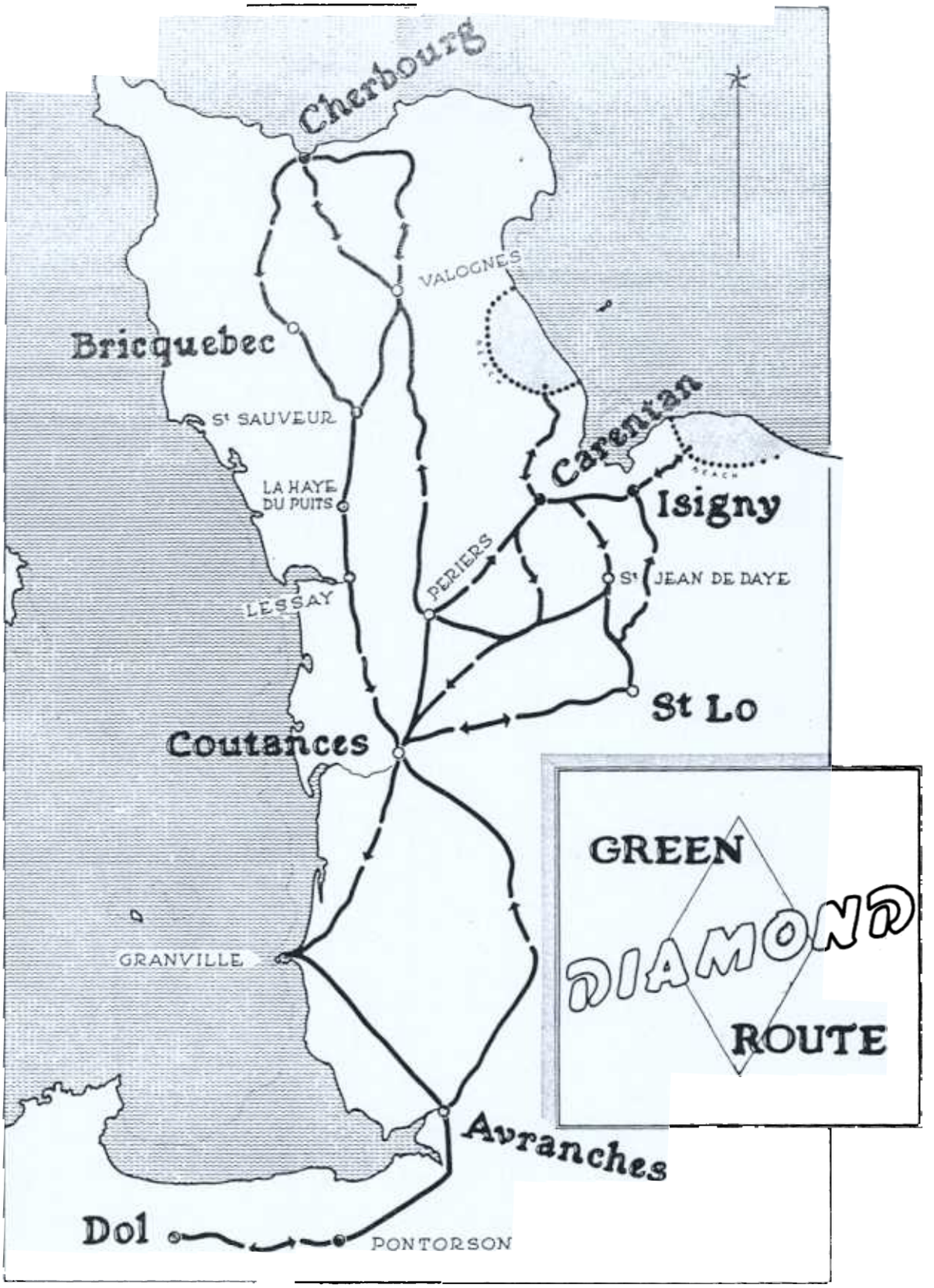
POL routes differed from other line of communication routes because the pipehead locations, where trucks obtained their cargoes, constantly shifted with the construction and extension of pipelines. Thus, truck operations were never centered very long at one point of origin, and likewise the points of destination were scattered, the hauls being made to the locations at which the commodity was in demand. The POL Truck Fleet grew until in March 1945 it was composed of 17 truck companies, of which five were equipped with 750-gallon tankers, nine with 2,000-gallon tankers and three with 3,000-gallon POL carriers. The latter three were constructed by mounting four 750-gallon skid tanks on a 10-ton semi-trailer flat bed. These were not in operation until March 1945. The accomplishments of the POL Truck Fleet are reflected in the fact that from 14 June 1944 to 28 February 1945, it hauled a total of 461,380 long tons of POL products.[59]

In addition to the POL hauled by the 17 bulk tank truck companies, much was hauled on the regular line of communication routes in 5-gallon cans.

been moved from the ports or the pipeheads to the forward decanting points

The Green Diamond Route, activated 10 October 1944 and closed 1 November 1944, extended from the ports and beaches of Normandy to Dol, located at the northern base of the Brest Peninsula. The purpose of the

59 **Chart showing Motor Transport Service Express Hauls, prepared by Statistics Branch, OCOT, ETO.**



operation was to move supplies to the rail transfer point at Dol, for subsequent line of communication hauls by rail. The principal towns through which it passed on route from the ports and beaches to Dol were Granville and Avranches, as shown on the accompanying map. During the peak of operations, 19 Q.M. truck companies (TC) were assigned to the movement. Five of these companies were equipped with 2½-ton standard trucks, six with 2½-ton cab-over-engine trucks, two with 3- to 6-ton semi-trailers, five with 10-ton semi-trailers and one with 12½-ton semi-trailers. The total average lift capacity of all this equipment was 6,440 tons, but, due to mud conditions at the dumps, at times tractor trailers bogged down and made operations difficult or impossible. Motor Transport Service statistics covering the dates 14 October to 1 November, inclusive, show a total of 15,590 tons hauled over the Green Diamond Route.

MTS Support for the Ardennes Campaign

The Ardennes campaign opened for the Transportation Corps at 2230 hours on 17 December 1944 when Maj. General F.S. Ross ordered the equivalent of 600 2½-ton trucks to be brought to Reims not later than noon of the next day to start the now famous move of the 101st Airborne Division to Bastogne.[60] This was the beginning of the movement of units and supplies that continued up to 16 January 1945 and involved the dispatching of the equivalent of 2,157 2½-ton trucks, 627 of which were to meet the demand for troop transport. All told, during the Ardennes campaign more than 90,000 troops and more than 1,000,000 tons of supplies were

[60] Short Report on Important Transportation Developments in the ETO, 16 June 1945, p. 9.

moved by T.C. trucks.

Some Motor Transport Service units became trapped at Bastogne and fought with the infantry, or shuttled troops within the city to outmaneuver the German Panzers. While performing its task during the entire operation, the Service lost 50 trucks and 28 men killed, wounded or miss-

Typical of the comments offered by the commanders whose troops were rushed to the front by MTS is a letter which stated, "I should like you to know that all feel that the manner in which you picked up and delivered our two divisions into the battle area was just about the finest job of its kind we have ever seen."

After the Ardennes break-through of the Germans had been thoroughly repulsed, and the U.S. Armies had recovered their stability, preparations were begun for the crossing of the last great water barrier to the [illegible] of Germany, the Rhine.[61] Much equipment of a most unusual type was needed for this crossing. It was necessary to move a small navy from the seaports to the forward areas so that when the first crossing had been made the floating equipment would be instantly available to expand the operation. In order to accomplish this, M-19 and M-25 tank transporters were used by the T.C. to move Landing Craft Vehicle-Personnel (LCVPs), Landing Vehicles Tracked (LVTs) and Landing Craft Mechanized (LCMs). Each type of vessel required special preparation, with the latter, which was 77 feet long, 14 feet wide, 18 feet high and weighed 46 tons, offering the most difficult movement problem. Route reconnaissance was necessary both for overhead clearance and bridge strength, but in spite of the limitations the movement was successfully

61 Ibid, p. 10.

accomplished in a minimum amount of time

During the height of a rush period in preparation for the crossing, motor transport hauled tremendous tonnages. From 11 to 23 February a total of 1,059,145 tons or a daily average of 81,472 tons was hauled by truck, and in addition 377,348 persons were moved. From 24 February to 11 March the volume was increased to a total of 1,737,601, giving an average of 108,600 tons per day, and 634,425 personnel were moved. These figures include all operations, but at that time a considerable portion of the movement was designated to expedite the crossing.

The last and greatest trucking undertaking on the Continent prior to the cessation of hostilities, was known as the XYZ Motor Transport operation, which moved freight from railheads eastward in support of the four U.S. Armies' advance beyond the Rhine.[62] The operation was anticipated by the organization of what later amounted to four Motor Transport Division headquarters, one for each Army.[63] Traffic control and dispatch points were tentatively selected, equipment and maintenance needs were considered and provided for, probable routes determined, trucks and truck units obtained or alerted and SOPs drawn up for appropriate distribution.

On 25 March, after the advance had begun, plans were put in operation, and within three days 9,000 tons of cargo were being hauled daily to the four Armies on a one-day turnaround basis, and an additional 3,000 tons of packaged POL. An average of 15,000 tons per day was moved

62 Ibid, pp. 11-14; History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. VI, Part 2, Chap. V, pp. 9ff.

63 One Q.M. Group served in the capacity of a Motor Transport Division.

in the XYZ operation between 25 March and 8 May, with a total of 629,296 long tons for the entire period. As a maximum, the equivalent of 238 truck companies, driving 2½-ton trucks, operated on the haul, and cargo was forwarded over an average distance of 160 miles.

Development and Use of Inland Waterways

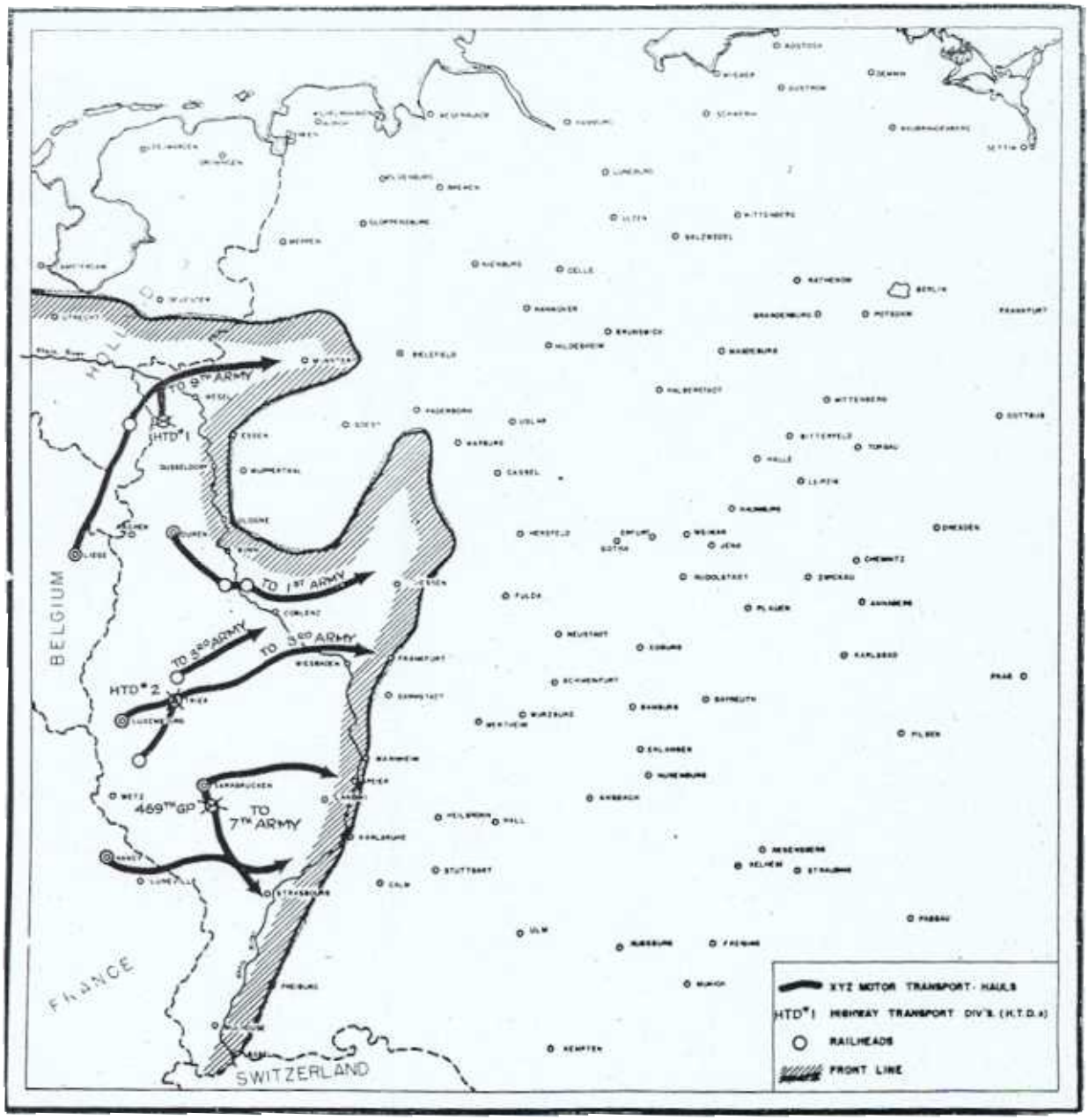
During the Overlord planning period, Lt. General Lee had considered plans for the extensive use of the waterways of the Continent for distributing Army cargo, but apparently the plans were not greatly developed. Furthermore, there was not much opportunity for rehabilitating and employing inland waterways until the American forces had reached the Siegfried Line. During the first five months of Continental operations, the control of barge traffic was placed in a Comzone Inland Waterways Committee, including representatives of G-4, Comzone, the Office of the Chief of Engineers and the OCOT.[64] This Committee appears to have been unable to produce little if any barge movements in western France during this period.

In southern France, the Mediterranean Theater officials also found that destroyed bridges, a lack of sufficient barges and towing facilities, as well as other difficulties prevented development of the Rhone River canal system. In fact, although the inland waterways eventually carried substantial tonnages in the north, barge traffic in southern France was never an important factor in moving military supplies during the European campaign.

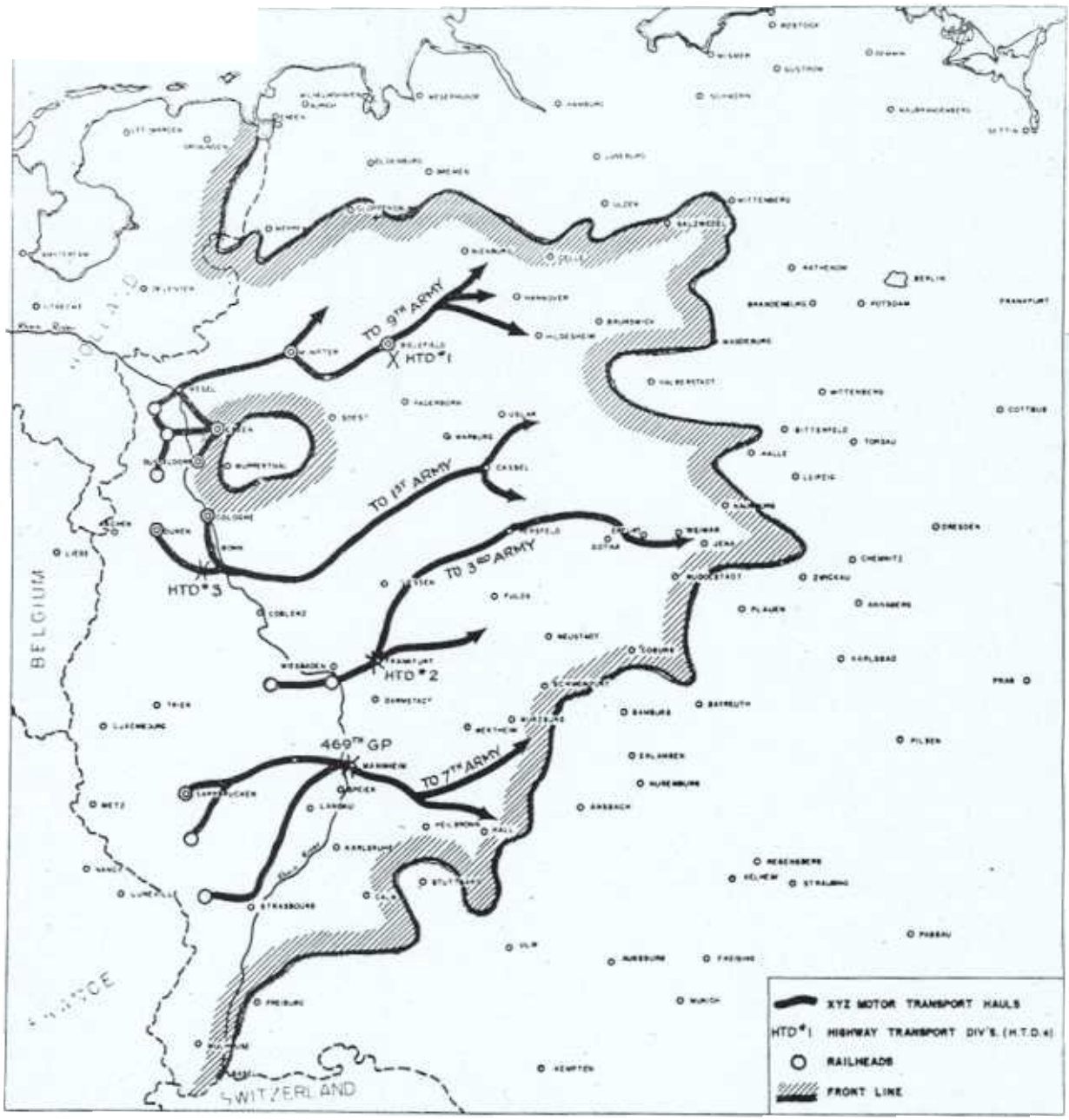
By the latter part of October 1944, the Oise River and canal system in western France was opened for traffic, offering a means of transport-

64 Ibid, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, pp. 62ff.

XYZ MOTOR TRANSPORT HAULS
30 MARCH 1945

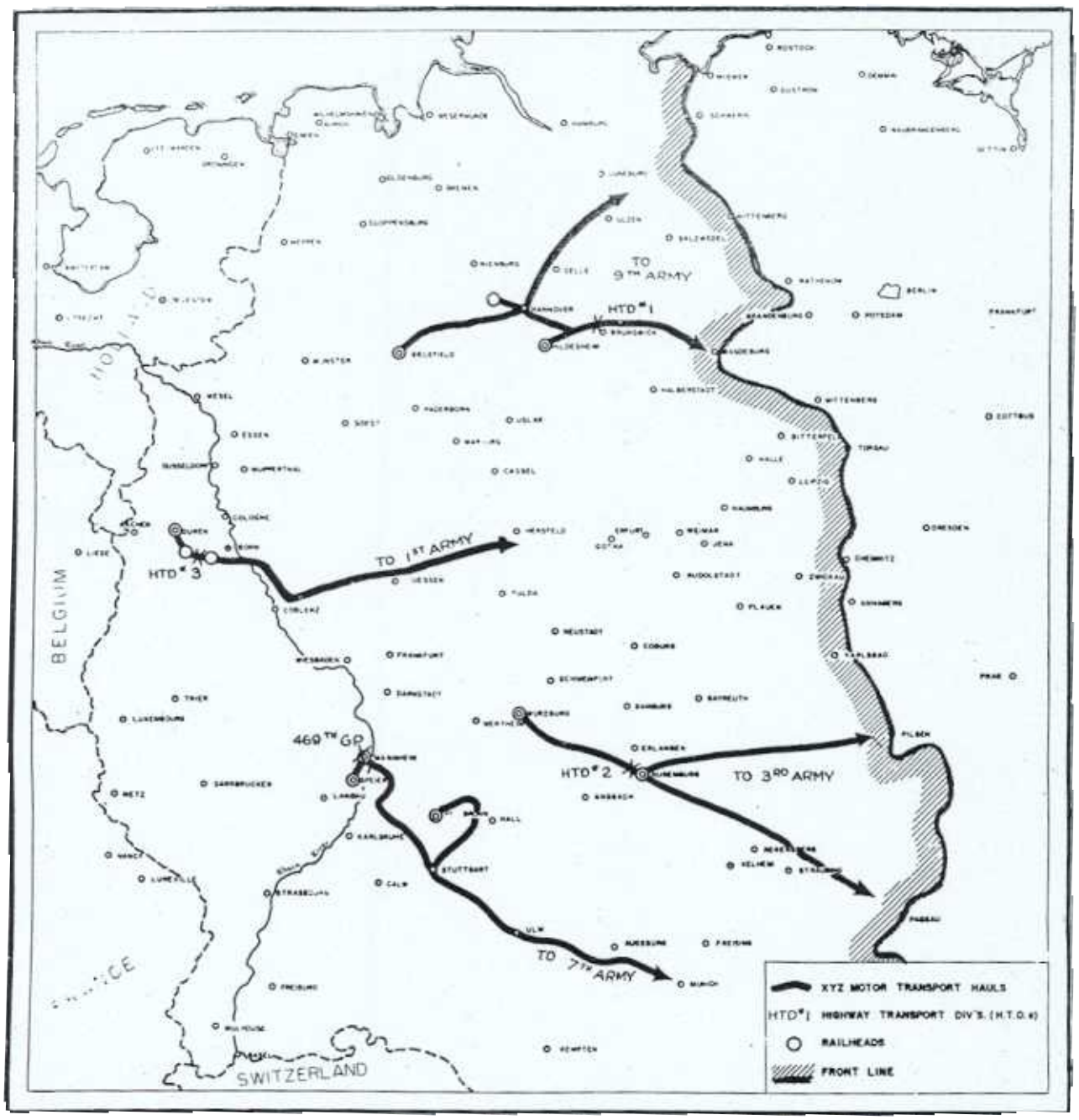


HAULS


TO 9TH ARMY
HTD #1
TO 1ST ARMY
HTD #3
TO 3RD ARMY
HTD #2
469TH GP
TO 7TH ARMY
BELGIUM
SWITZERLAND
XYZ MOTOR TRANSPORT HAULS
HTD #1 HIGHWAY TRANSPORT DIV'S. (H.T.D.s)
RAILHEADS
FRONT LINE

XYZ MOTOR TRANSPORT HAULS

5 MAY 1945



Paris. ater, tha
a Comzone or on the OCOT responsibility for the supervision
of the o ration of all inland waterways in the U.S. zone, resulted in
e acti an Inlan aterw vision, OCOT. The mission of
the ne Division, which repl nland Waterways ommittee,
was to assist the Fren , Belgian an Dutch gov al agencies
n operating their canal syst The vision was to supervise and
aid these agencies n their efforts in restorin inland waterways traf
fic insure that the equipment was available for repairing inland water-
way routes; and was utilized to the best advantage; and coordinate move-
ments, wher necessary, between the severa countries, so that barge
traffic would not be hampered by technicalities.

The principal inland waterways serving for the movement of U.S Army cargo and essential civilian supplies were the Albert Canal, extending from Antwerp to Liege, and the Seine River, where the heaviest traffic flowed from Rouen to Paris. On 7 December the Seine was opened for the movement of a limited amount of military traffic, and about the same time a round-about route was employed for barge movements forward of Antwerp.[65] As previously noted, the Albert Canal was shortly brought into operation, replacing the lengthier route. But the development of these and other inland waterways was effected slowly. The retreating Germans and the Allied Strategic Air Forces had accomplished a thorough job of smashing key locks and bridges, and the necessary repairs were completed only gradually, although the Corps of Engineers units (including Engineer Port Construction and Repair units) assigned to the task,

65 Short Report on Important Transportation Developments in the ETO, 16 June 1945, p. 20.

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a state where it was imperative that civilian goods, in addition to U.S. military civil affairs allocations, had to be handled by the transport system, even at the expense of military movements. The most logical method appeared to be use of inland waterways, so plans were laid to discharge 3,000 tons of French cargo daily at the Seine River ports, 1,000 tons of which were to be consumed locally, and the remaining 2,000 tons to move by barge up the Seine. The OCOT predicted accurately, that the program could not begin until mid-February because of ice and flood conditions, and it insisted that the 3,000 tons daily of U.S. supplies be moved before the French civilian goods was cleared from the ports. It was believed that such a requirement would assist in securing greater French cooperation in supplying the requisite number of tugs and barges for moving American supplies when French requirements were placed second.

As inland waterways traffic increased during the first quarter of 1945 it became necessary for the Inland Waterways Division to supplement

Lille, Brussels, Liege and Paris. Consequently, T.C. port companies, in addition to POWs and civilian labor, were assigned to these ports to assist in discharging barge cargo. Other types of work performed by the Inland Waterways Division may be summarized as follows: procuring additional equipment such as barges, tugs, marine tractors and occasional-

operations and clothing for barge operators; establishing canal patrols to prevent pilferage and insure constant movement of barge traffic (MTLs and J-boats were employed for patrolling work); expediting the movement of inland waterways traffic in various other ways; maintaining necessary

records of cargo movements; and planning for inland waterways operations in Germany.

The accomplishments of the Inland Waterways Division in the face of its many difficulties and handicaps is reflected in the following tabulation of U.S. Army cargo transported on Continental waterways, during the period December 1944 through April 1945:

INLAND WATERWAY OPERATIONS ON THE CONTINENT OF EUROPE[66]

(U.S. ARMY CARGO TRANSPORTED - LONG TONS)

PORT	OPERATION	Dec. 1944	Jan. 1945	Feb. 1945	Mar. 1945	Apr. 1945
ANTWERP	Loaded	50,172	39,751	49,808	78,298	148,926
	Dispatched	15,630	59,218	62,651	79,697	140,465
	Unloaded at Destination	1,507	34,078	69,028	83,666	139,764
GHENT	Loaded	0	3,349	24,990	47,921	80,490
	Dispatched	0	968	23,508	48,596	83,491
	Unloaded at Destination	0	0	11,264	40,718	68,754
ROUEN	Loaded	13,525	57,777	30,906	85,195	100,786
	Dispatched	10,729	53,449	21,861	89,312	102,531
	Unloaded at Destination	3,152	24,456	21,675	67,276	82,013
LE HAVRE	Loaded	0	0	0	651	5,062
	Dispatched	0	0	0	651	4,399
	Unloaded at Destination	0	0	0	0	1,343
TOTAL	Loaded	63,697	100,877	105,704	212,065	335,264
	Dispatched	26,359	113,635	108,020	218,256	330,886
	Unloaded at Destination	4,659	58,534	101,967	191,660	291,874

66 Ibid, Appendix 14.

T.C. Supply on the Continent

It has been remarked that probably the heaviest and the most important work of the Supply Division, OCOT, was performed before D-Day, in the period when planning was undertaken and requisitions were prepared for all basic T.C. supply items.[67] Scarcely less important, however, were T.C. supply operations on the Continent in support of port, railway, and to a certain extent motor transport operations. Many of the same difficulties encountered in the U.K. prior to June 1944, continued as the campaign progressed through France into Germany. Nevertheless, problems of procurement, personnel, storage, issue, distribution, and liaison with various agencies were only to be expected in conducting T.C. supply activities during the campaign, and on the whole they were satisfactorily overcome.

Immediately after D-Day the Supply Division, headed by Colonel M.G. Jewett, was concerned mainly with the transfer to the Continent of T.C. material stored in the various depots in the British Isles and the establishment and operation of depots on the Continent. Initial plans had called for the establishment of the first T.C. depot at Cherbourg, but due to the delay in the port's capture, T.C. equipment was brought in (occasionally "misdirected") to the beaches and taken to Engineer and Ordnance depots, where it was made available for any service that requisitioned it.[68] This was particularly true for 11th and 4th Port equipment, although as previously mentioned, some of it was later recovered for the T.C. There also was some aid to fulfilling the T.C. Supply Di-

67 History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. IV, Section I, p. 10.

68 Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #122, p. 101. Poor documentation and improper packing also contributed to the misdirection and actual loss of T.C. equipment, particularly marine engine parts.

vision assignment fro the tablishment of a T.C. dump in both the Omaha and Utah beach areas, shortly after the beachheads were consolidated.

T.C. depots were then established as the Armies moved forward from ie beaches. By D lus 30 a purportedly temporary but actually permanent depot was established at Bricquebec, and the T.C. supply situation began to improve.[69] This depot received both marine parts and railroad ment. That proved o be the principal ontinental depot for marine parts was opened at Cherbourg on D lus 90, but not until November 1944 were marine spare parts and equipment adequately stocked there. In the meantime, a main supply depot was established at Rennes, and then a large railroad supply depot was opened at Paris. Ultimately, when SOLOC had been brought under ETO Comzone control, there were ten T.C. depots and dumps on the Continent. Their location and other pertinent information concerning them is tabulated below:[70]

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69 Ibid.

70 History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. VI, Part I, Chap. II, Section IV, pp. 91 and 92. A T.C. rear area depot was retained in the U.K., where materials coming from the U.S. and British sources were stored for issuance upon requisition from the Continent. Ibid, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, p. 25.

Depot	Location	Type of Supplies	Base Section	Base Depot Company, etc.	In long tons Storage Capacity	In long tons per day Total Handling Capability
T-700	Bricquebec	General	Normandy	785th	16,000	225
Dump	Utah	General	Normandy	(Not given)	1,000	50
Dump	Omaha	General	Normandy	(Not given)	5,000	100
T-703	Paris[71]	General	Seine	786th	13,000	294
T-704	Cherbourg	Marine	Normandy	780th	1,800	100
T-705	Liege	General	Advance	781st	18,000	660
T-706	Marseilles	Marine	Delta	807th	15,000	150
T-707	Marseilles	Rail	Delta	788th	6,700	225
T-708	Marseilles	Rail (KD Cars)	Delta	783rd	21,000	1,800
T-709	Chaligny[72]	Rail	CONAD	704RGD	5,100	525

An interesting feature of T.C. depots was that, in the main, they were not associated with Army General Depots where most of the services stored and issued their supplies. It was more satisfactory to have depots with rail supplies located convenient to railway lines, and depots for port and marine equipment adjacent to ports.[73] This fact meant that each American operated port contained at least a small storage area for port and marine supplies, and it required the division of certain T.C. depot companies into small detachments to operate each one. In addition to the seven depot companies listed above, there were four others that had been dispatched to the Continent from the U.S., and some of

71 This depot was located at Le Bourget airfield. Apparently, the large T.C. depot originally established at Paris was later discontinued. The growth of emergency air shipments from the U.S. for critical marine and electrical parts had led to the establishment of a depot at Le Bourget. Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #122, p. 102.

72 This depot was operated primarily as a construction and material yard and stores depot for handling bridge material transferred from Dijon and Marseilles. The Supply Division, OCOT, was "in no substantial way" responsible for the operation of this depot, for it was controlled by the 1st MRS. History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. VI, Chap. II, Section IV, p. 88.

73 Ibid, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, p. 25.

these were split up into as many as five units.[74] The current tables of organization did not provide for sufficient personnel strength to carry out that many small T.C. supply agency operations satisfactorily, but the practice was nevertheless necessary.[75] Furthermore, the tables of equipment for T.C. depot companies did not insure enough equipment for subdividing the personnel of the companies, and so unless additional equipment could be borrowed, each detachment was handicapped in providing efficient service.[76]

The size of the T.C. depot and supply task is indicated by the fact that a total of 30,000 items were necessary for marine operations and 20,000 for military railways.[77] By 1 October 1944, the Supply Division, OCOT, had received in France in excess of 150,000 tons of T.C. material, and handled approximately 25,000 separate items, including original planning items, replacements, spare parts and other T.C. supplies.[78] These items probably included those which were borrowed from the Corps of Engineers and the Navy, in addition to dozens of "coal grabs" borrowed from French officials. The Supply Division also frequently performed considerable service in the capacity of an exchange agency, borrowing from one service or unit to loan to another. The scope of its

74 Interview with Maj. G.B. McMullen, Training Division, OCT, ASF.

75 Certain depots employed French civilian workers wherever possible, and one depot utilized POW labor.

76 Interview with Lt.Col. M.A. Darragh, Training Division, OCT, ASF. All depot companies lack adequate means of transportation, although not necessarily because of their tables of equipment. During the early months of operation on the Continent, because of their diverse type and size, many T.C. items required special transportation equipment, but even ordinary rail and motor transport facilities were at a premium.

77 History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, p. 23.

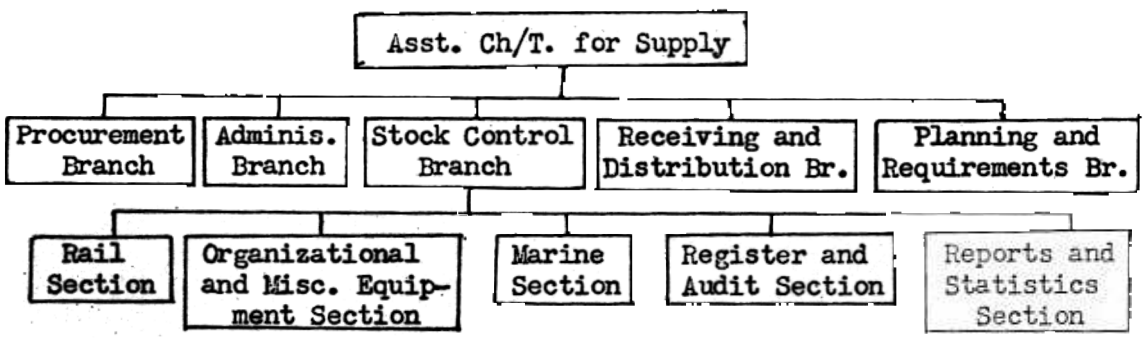
78 Ibid, Vol. IV, Section 1, p. 10.

work increased after October as subsequent discussion will show.

Organization of the Supply Division, OCOT

The essential organization of the Supply Division, OCOT, as established in the U.K., underwent only slight revision during the period of the campaign on the Continent. The changes included the establishment of a Procurement Branch, which actually was the addition of personnel

the Comzone General Purchasing Agent. They also included the activation,



The Planning and Requirements Branch consolidated requirements submitted by the other Divisions of the OCOT and by the various stock control sections of the Supply Division, and submitted them to other Services and staff sections.[80] It processed requisitions for T.C. equipment and other equipment required by the T.C. with the New York Port of Em-

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79 Ibid, Vol. VI, Part 1, Chap. II, Section IV, p. 91.

80 Ibid, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, p. 22.

the T.C. Supply Officer in the U.K., with other Services on the Continent, and it also processed requisitions for local procurement. It maintained, together with the technical sections of the Stock Control Branch, necessary records and files to insure the follow-up on all requisitions, and to expedite delivery. It procured those items available locally, in coordination with the T.C. Liaison Officer (later the Procurement Branch) assigned to the office of the General Purchasing Agent, Comzone.

The Receiving and Distribution Branch received incoming manifests or requisitions, and directed the disposition of T.C. items after coordinating with the chief of the proper stock control section. It also directed the movement of material from ports and/or beaches to the depots.

The Chief of the Stock Control Branch supervised and coordinated the activities of the sections of his office described below, allocated depot space and prepared plans for additional depots as required. He also prepared monthly tonnage priority allocations for the in-shipment of T.C. supplies and equipment. The Stock Control Branch was responsible for the preparation of estimates of requirements for various types of T.C. supplies, accomplished procurement through the railroad, marine, and organizational and miscellaneous equipment sections as described below. It processed requisitions for T.C. supplies and supervised the storage and issue of these supplies. The Stock Control Branch also maintained stock records of all equipment, spare parts, and supplies stored and issued, showing location, amounts due, and maintenance levels. It maintained the necessary records of supplies issued to Allied Governments to permit settlement of accounts.

The duties of the more important of the Stock Control Branch sec-

tions were as fo .ows The Rail Section perf ed the duties indicated above for items of railroad supply and equipment, in close cooperation with Headquarters, 2nd MRS, to insure constant familiarity with its operating needs. It maintained the stock records for railway items and issued shipping releases for available railway supplies. The functions of the Marine Section were th se described for the Stock Control Branch as they pertained to the storage, control, and issue of marine supplies, equipment, and spare parts. The Organizational and Miscellaneous Equipment Section prepared estimates of requirements for organizational equipment, maintenance and reserve, and the necessary requisitions. It supervised storage and issue of organizational equipment and its maintenance and reserve, and maintained stock records. This section recorded all T.C. equipment not specifically assigned to Marine or Rail Sections. It also maintained records of major items of "other service equipment", so as to control pooled items.

On 12 February the Supply Division, OCOT, took over the administrative details of T.C. depots and the primary responsibility for the supply of T.C. equipment in southern France.[81] This task was accomplished without strain, due to the well established organization and supply position of SOLOC and the degree of efficiency worked out by the Supply Division, OCOT. A former chapter has discussed the early T.C. supply developments under the 1st MRS and the North African Theater transportation organization. The first of the T.C. depots was not established at Marseilles until after the port had been in operation for some time, and after the widespread area of activity and attendant confusion of

[81] Ibid, Vol. VI, Chap. II, Section IV, pp. 87-88.

the beach operations had led to the scattering of T.C. equipment and supplies and some losses. As a matter of record, material from the phased shipments into southern France were still being received into the Marseilles T.C. depots as late as March 1945, for it had been discovered that some of the material in the shipments had been dispatched to depots of other services, or was in the hands of organizations not authorized to possess such items. It was this material that was gradually recovered for the T.C.

It will be recalled that two T.C. base depot companies in southern France were attached to 1st MRS headquarters, and although these two companies remained attached to the same headquarters throughout the campaign, they came under the full administrative control of the Supply Division, OCOT, in February 1945. In short, as one historical report states, the problem of receiving and disbursing T.C. supplies through the absorption of SOLOC into Comzone, ETO, produced a quantitative rather than a qualitative change in the functions of the Supply Division, OCOT, and adequate supply, personnel and installations were made available by SOLOC.[82]

It is difficult to reduce the Supply Division, OCOT, accomplishments to a tonnage basis, both because statistics of T.C. supply equipment and supplies delivered to operating units have never been totalled, and because the services rendered the British, the French and other Allied nations in supplying material and effecting repairs on T.C. equipment cannot be measured. Certain indicative data, however, may be cited During the last quarter of 1944, 45,075 long tons of T.C. materiel was

82 Ibid.

received i stern urope fro nd the [83] iese shi nts were discharged at Cherbourg, Le Havre, Rouen and Antwerp and transported to one of the four T.C. depots maintained at that time. During the same period, 11,000 pounds of material was received by air.

French and Belgian sources alsc tributed greatly to T.C. upply requirements. By the end December 1944, French agencies had ro- vided 700,000 rail torpedoes, 9 hospital trains of 17 cars each, and 600 refrigerator cars on a rental basis; and had repaired 400 Bolero locomotives and 130 Diesel locomotives.[84] Captured material and salvaged material of an unspecified amount also were obtained.

British contributions are equally difficult to itemize. The joint stockpile established in the U.K. prior to D-Day contained marine craft, locomotives, tools and equipment required to maintain four lines of communication on the Continent, two American and two British. The material subsequently was increased to maintain four lines of communication for each nation. These supplies and equipment were procured from American and U.K. sources. As previously mentioned, the British had supplied cars for conversion to hospital trains, and tools and equipment required in the railway car erection program, as well as the barge erection program. The extensive number of British marine construction companies in the U.K. also contributed extensively to marine engine and other marine requirements of the T.C.

83 Ibid, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, p. 25.

84 Ibid, p. 24. By 1 April 1945 the French had furnished 10 additional hospital trains with a total of 162 cars. The cars were converted in SNCF shops in accordance with U.S. Army Medical Department and T.C. specifications. The tonnage saved by the acquisition amounted to 2,430 tons. Ibid, Vol. VI, Chap. II, Section IV, p. 82.

During the first quarter of 1945 the Supply Division, OCOT, prepared 411 requisitions on the New York Port of Embarkation, 207 on other theater services and 107 on the U.K.[85] The requisitions placed on New York included nine special operation (PROCO) projects, calling for such items as trucks, steam locomotives, material for the French railroad organization (the SNCF), fork lift tractors, signal equipment, and several types of material for the redeployment program. In long tons, approximately 216,363 tons were requisitioned on New York, 1,062 on other theater services, and 647 on the U.K. Requisitions to repair deadlined marine craft also were placed on the U.S. Navy base at Exeter.

French and Belgian sources became increasingly contributory during the same quarter.[86] Factories, repair shops, foundries, and warehouses of dealers in marine and rail items were thoroughly surveyed and recorded by the Procurement Branch, Supply Division, OCOT, in collaboration with the General Purchasing Agent. Both short-term and programmed requirements were placed on the French and Belgian governments. Unlike most of the other services, the T.C. Supply Division received no rejections by either government on its long term demands. Examples of the demands placed on the French government during the first quarter of 1945 are:[87] for furnishing and converting 10 hospital trains; for the fabrication of 24 parts, involving 35 tons of metal, for use on U.S. steam locomotives; for the installation of cargo heating systems in four "Y" tankers (barges); for 500 metallic steam line connectors for use on hospital trains; for

85 Ibid, Vol. VI, Part 1, Chap. II, Section IV, p. 85. The Supply Division received a total of 2,879 requisitions during the quarter.

86 Ibid, p. 82.

87 Ibid, pp. 82-3.

special parts for American locomotives, including 280 elbows, 125 gaskets, 360 heads of metallic steam hose, and 1,357 other metallic parts; and for furnishing 500 wood and steel benches which were installed in semi-trailers in order to convert them to passenger vehicles.

It was estimated that the procurement of supplies on the Continent from 1 January to 1 April 1945 amounted to 6,500 tons of material. From a shipping standpoint, this tonnage was in addition to that saved by French repair of 36 2-8-0 locomotives. Had it been necessary to return these locomotives to the U.S. or the U.K. for repairs, approximately 2,900 tons of shipping space would have been required.

While the Supply Division, OCOT, was receiving considerable aid from locally procured supplies and services, it also was furnishing equipment to other nations. For example, during the first quarter of 1945 what was described as "a large quantity of railway parts" was turned over to the British 21st Army Group and the French SCNF.[88] At the same time the Supply Division participated in the program for supplying much needed clothing to French railroad workers. Furthermore, it phased requirements for overhauling the French railroad system to meet military needs.

Throughout this monograph are scattered references to critical T.C. supply requirements. It is unnecessary to recapitulate those references here, and it is inadvisable to enlarge this section by adding others that occurred with an important bearing on T.C. operations. The lessons on T.C. supply that are to be drawn from the campaign have been briefly summarized in one of the theater General Board reports, but they are too

88 Ibid, p. 84.

numerous for reproduction here.[89] Enough has been said to show the supply handicaps faced by the T.C. as a new Army service, and to show how it gathered experience and accomplished its assignment essentially in a successful manner.

89 Report of the General Board, USFET, Study #122, Chap. 8.

XIII. PROGRAMMING CONTINENTAL MOVEMENTS

A large backlog of undischarged American cargo vessels had developed in European waters by 1 November 1944, but there were different interpretations in the theater and Washington as to its significance. Major General Gross termed it a shipping congestion which was "delaying operations in the Pacific and postponing the termination of the war, without greatly benefiting operations on the Continent."[1] On the other hand, Comzone Headquarters in Paris believed that the number of undischarged ships was not excessive, and in fact, charged that the war effort was being impeded because of Washington's refusal to meet the theater's shipping requirements.[2] The preponderance of evidence indicates that there was a shipping congestion, and that irrespective of the effect on Pacific operations, the European Theater was unnecessarily wasteful of shipping at a time when there were not enough vessels available to fill all U.S. Army needs.

The congestion arose from a complex of closely interrelated factors which cannot easily be disentangled. Tactical and strategic developments at the start of the campaign denied the American Army possession of Continental ports in accordance with preinvasion planning, but in an effort to insure full supply of the American combat forces, vessels loaded in the U.K., preloaded vessels dispatched from the U.S., just prior to and after D-Day, and regular supply vessels from the U.S. were made available in the theater. At least as early as July, the OCT, ASF, believed that

1 Personal letter to Maj.Gen. F.S. Ross from Maj.Gen. C.P. Gross, 24 Oct. 1944.

2 Letter to Maj.Gen. C.P. Gross from Brig.Gen. J.M. Franklin, 5 Nov. 1944.

a congestion was developing, and hence contemplated cutting down on sailings for September arrivals in the theater, unless the theater demonstrated its ability to discharge the vessels already in its control.[3] On 1 August the theater protested any such reduction, stating that the then faster moving tactical situation justified the dispatch of the 175 vessels it requested for September, and pointing out that WSA concurred in the theater analysis. It also reported that prior to the equinoctial storms there would be an intensive drive to crowd in a maximum amount of discharge on the Continent. The daily average discharge was expected to reach 30,000 tons of cargo during August and 40,000 tons during September.

In the course of an exchange of messages on the subject during August, General Marshall radioed General Eisenhower, pointing to the critical Allied shipping situation, and stressing the need for the speedy release of vessels and the clearing up of port congestion in the theater.[4] The radio included the statement: "Sufficient shipping is available to support all operations in progress or planned if economically used, but there will not be sufficient shipping if resources are wasted." General Eisenhower replied, in effect, that he was certain that the theater could do much to effect economies without prejudice to current operations.

General Marshall dispatched a similar warning to the North African theater shortly after the invasion of southern France, and received a reply stating that the late decision to mount the Dragoon operation had created an unfavorable port situation, but that as soon as the shipping

3 Radio Cm-In 1123 (2 Aug. 1944) to AGWAR from C.G., USAF in ETO.

4 Quoted in Memo to Maj. W.J. Daly from Lt.Col. M.E. Sprague, 1 Sept. 1944.

congestion had become evident, the theater had requested cancellation of certain contemplated sailings in U.S. convoys to the Mediterranean, and had made every possible effort to expedite the discharge of vessels on hand. The North African Theater estimated that the existing congestion would be eliminated by 1 October. In general, the estimate proved accurate and thereafter no serious congestion occurred in southern France. In fact, at times its discharge and forward delivery capabilities were not realized. Occasionally, when such situations developed some shipping destined for discharge in the Channel ports was diverted to southern France

Western France ports and beaches achieved a discharge rate during August commensurate with Comzone 1 August estimates (approximately 30,000 tons per day), but the backlog of ships awaiting discharge was not materially reduced. Consequently, at the end of that month ETO was informed that future sailings from the United States would be cut 10 vessels for six convoys.[5] Washington reported a shortage of vessels for September and October sailings, occasioned partly by the late release of vessels from the ETO. It also reported that the theater's retention of from 100 to 150 vessels was too large and that it seriously affected meeting the demands of other theaters.[6]

It is unnecessary to detail the subsequent exchange of messages between the theater and Washington. The principal point to note is that during September and October the rate of ships' discharge of Army cargo at western France ports and beaches fell progressively lower than that for August (938,271 long tons were discharged in August, 883,477 tons in

5 Ibid.

6 Radio WAR 89859 SPTWC 561, 31 Aug. 1944.

September, and 784,290 tons in October],[7] and that largely at theater requests, the sailings from the U.S. to the theater were not correspondingly reduced. By the latter part of October, 243 vessels which had been dispatched from the U.S. were located in northern European waters, and only approximately 60 were being currently discharged.[8] At the same time the theater requested an increase in future sailings from the U.S.

On 2 November this request prompted a reply from Lt. General Somervell that in four future convoy sailings the number of vessels would be cut from a total of 118 vessels to 67.[9] He explained to the theater that its number of idle ships had grown because of its insistent demands for more and more shiploads of supplies, and its assurance that there would be a material improvement in discharge capabilities. This improve- had not materialized, as indicated above, and Lt. General Somervell asserted that "The world-wide shipping situation is so critical that we cannot accept any increase in the number of idle ships; rather it is imperative that congestion be relieved and turnaround improved."

Furthermore, Washington authorities were convinced that the theater was wasting shipping, because according to radio reports sent from the theater 47 vessels retained in northern European waters for the transfer of stores and vehicles from the U.K. to the Continent, had not been put to full use.[10] Fourteen "stores" ships were shown to have made no round

7 History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, Table 7 (following p. 62).

8 Memo to Ch/T, ASF, from Brig.Gen. J.M. Franklin, 19 Jan. 1945.

9 Quoted in a memo to J.F. Byrnes, Director of the Office of War Mobilization, from Gen. G.C. Marshall, 22 Nov. 1944. Lt.Gen. Somervell's statement to ETO was said to have been directly in line with suggestions which Director Byrnes presented in conversation with Gen. Marshall.

10 Radio Cm-out 66841 (22 Nov. 1944) to Hqs., Comzone and G-4, SHAEF from OCOT, ASF.

trips between England and the Continent between 1 September and 14 November. One of these vessels was a refrigerator ship, made available to the theater on 17 September. The OCT, ASF, expressed the hope that its information regarding the idleness of this vessel in particular was in error, "in view of the world-wide shortage of refrigerator vessels." Of the other 47 vessels, 11 had made no round trip to the Continent between 1 October and 14 November, 6 vessels had made one trip, 2 vessels had completed two trips, and 8 had completed three trips.[11]

During October, ASF secured Comzone approval to send Brig. General J.M. Franklin from the OCT, ASF, to assist in bringing into balance the shipping program and vessel discharge capacity of the ETO. Brig. General Franklin reached the theater on 28 October with instructions requiring his concurrence in future theater requests for ships. Apparently, he gave initial approval to a theater estimate of the number of ship arrivals for December and January, because Washington authorities had requested an immediate report and because he accepted the G-4, Comzone, estimate of theater discharge capabilities.[12] G-4, Comzone, had stated that it could discharge 150 ships in France and 50 in the U.K. during November, thus materially reducing the backlog of undischarged vessels.

As soon as Brig. General Franklin had had time to study the situation for himself, however, he revised his estimate of December and January requirements, and urged ASF to withhold approval of any increase for

11 See also report of radio conversation between Maj.Gen. C.P. Gross and Maj.Gen. F.S. Ross, 5 Dec. 1944. The former suggested that rather than hold Liberty ships in the U.K. indiscriminately for from one to three months, the theater should request by cable ASF permission for retaining for cross-Channel operations, individual vessels that had sailed from the U.S.

12 Letter to Maj.Gen. C.P. Gross from Brig.Gen. J.M. Franklin, 5 Dec. 1944.

future sailings. On the basis of this advice, ASF informed the theater it would reject the request for increasing the number of ships sailing in later convoys. This notice prompted the G-4 officer, Comzone, to prepare the radio message for General Marshall referred to in the beginning of this section, regarding Washington's impeding the war effort by refusing the theater requests for shipping.

Presenting the Issues to General Eisenhower

In order to secure the highest approval for the message, about 3 November a group including Brig. General Franklin, Brig. General Stratton (the Comzone G-4 officer) and Lt. General Lee visited General Eisenhower and discussed the shipping situation.[13] The proposed radio was read to General Eisenhower, and while Comzone officials argued in favor of its immediate dispatch, Brig. General Franklin urged delay. He stated that Lt. General Somervell was entirely cognizant of the fact that the supply of the Armies in the ETO was vital and a number one priority; that his orders carried out by his Chief of Transportation were that the supply line of ships should always be kept full; that the bottleneck in the ETO was entirely the rate of discharge; that there was no immediate need for anxiety in the theater on account of the lack of ships, but rather the reverse; that there were approximately 200 ships then in the theater and under the most optimistic forecast of G-4, Comzone, that was enough to utilize fully the available discharge facilities both in France and in the U.K. for November; that the capacity to discharge 200 ships in the theater had not been demonstrated, and that all previous forecasts of discharge capabilities had been proven erroneous; and that if the rate

13 Ibid.

of discharge approached 200 ships in November there was not the slightest doubt but that an increase would be granted in the number of ships per convoy from the U.S.

Brig. General Franklin concluded his argument by opposing sending the proposed message to General Marshall because General Marshall would confer with Lt. General Somervell, and the latter would explain the situation by pointing out that the obvious bottleneck was the theater's capacity to discharge. According to Brig. General Franklin, the ensuing discussion was pretty heated, but it was the first time that the large number of ships awaiting their turn at berth had been brought properly to General Eisenhower's attention.[14] In any case, General Eisenhower decided against sending the telegram to General Marshall.

It should be noted, that while Brig. General Franklin believed too many ships had been sent to the theater, he also stated that there would have to be an increase in the number of ships dispatched in subsequent convoys if facilities were to be used to capacity and the Armies were to be supplied with the items they required. The seeming contradiction in this statement and Brig. General Franklin's opposition to granting the theater requests for more ships per convoy may be explained by his expectation that reforms already initiated would increase the rate of cargo discharge and clearance from the ports. The Armies' requirements

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14 The G-4, Comzone position may have been that the large number of undischarged vessels, with the opportunity for a high degree of selectivity, was unavoidable as well as beneficial in meeting supply requirements. In other words, vessels served as base depots. This position may have seemed justified when the rapid advance of the Armies made impracticable the establishment of a sufficient number of depots. Furthermore, in view of General Eisenhower's hope expressed at the above conference, that the Germans would be defeated by December, it appeared useless to establish more depots.

admittedly were heavy, a fact which explains the amount of cargo which G-4, Comzone, requested the U.S. to ship, but only by getting the cargo off the ships promptly would there be efficient use of shipping, and only by careful programming of incoming ships to ports affording adequate discharge facilities and ready and appropriate means of distribution, would the Armies be assured of receiving their requirements.

The steps taken to insure these three aims, namely adequate supply for the combat forces, efficient employment of shipping and economical and timely distribution of supplies, included General Eisenhower's dispatch of certain senior staff officers to confer with War Department officials on his critical ammunition and shipping situation;[15] the issuance of a Joint Chiefs of Staff directive prohibiting the use of ocean-going ships for storage purposes;[16] a shift of responsibility from G-4, Comzone, to the OCOT, for directing incoming shipments and distribution of cargo; the establishment of a Shipping Control Committee and a Shipping Diversion Committee; and the preparation and implementation of the aforementioned Port and Supply Movement Program.

Most of these steps were the outgrowth of the War Department effort to reduce the shipping congestion in U.K. waters, but some of them stem from the theater OCOT endeavor to insure effective use of transportation facilities. Perhaps it would be more accurate to describe the developments as a combined result of War Department and OCOT policies, and to compare them to a river formed by the convergence of two streams. For

15 Memo to Lt.Gen. B. Somervell, et al, from Maj.Gen. J.E. Hull, A/CH/S, Operations Div., 25 Nov. 1944.

16 Joint Chiefs of Staff Policy Memorandum #7, 10 Dec. 1944. Shipping congestion also had developed in the Southwest Pacific Theater, so that the JCS directive applied to that theater, along with the ETO and other areas.

purposes of clearer analysis the streams are treated separately, even though it is difficult to separate the water of the river as to source.

An illustration of this point is found in the methods which developed for controlling U.S. shipping in the theater. During the Bolero buildup period, British ports were used for receiving and distributing U.S. supplies, and the OCOT worked through the British Ministry of War Transport to develop efficient methods of controlling U.S. shipping in U.K. waters.

On the Continent, the British and the American forces for the most part operated their own ports, and so Comzone headquarters became the sole authority for controlling U.S. shipping. Comzone headquarters initially assigned its responsibility in this field to the OCOT, and accordingly, a Shipping Allocation and Diversion Section was established within the Marine Operations Division, OCOT, to assume these functions.[17] But this Section lacked any real authority, because G-4, Comzone, controlled the preparation of theater shipping schedules, the decision as to where vessels would discharge, and the ordering of ships to berths, with only nominal coordination with the OCOT.[18] Not only schedules for vessel discharge but also schedules for the forward movement of cargo were established by G-4.

In all aspects of transportation, as later discussion will show, by 1 November 1944 the efforts of the theater Chief of Transportation had achieved considerable progress in bringing about a more balanced relationship between the functions of his office and that of G-4, Comzone,

17 History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. IV, Section I, p. 3.

18 Letters to Maj.Gen. C.P. Gross from Brig.Gen. J.M. Franklin, 5 Nov. 1944 and 19 Jan. 1945.

but it was these efforts which War Department policies for reducing the ETO shipping congestion reinforced and brought to appropriate development in the Port and Supply Movement Program.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff 10 December directive prohibiting the use of shipping for storage purposes, calls attention to the Comzone failure to establish a sufficient number of depots, particularly intermediate depots, a subject which will be considered later in this monograph. The November conference of theater and War Department officials in Washington produced agreement on the principal that forward planning of shipping requirements must be prepared on a realistic basis of demonstrated discharge and port clearance capacities, and must be subject to continuing review and revision.[19]

Establishing a Shipping Control Committee

In furtherance of this understanding, on 5 December a Shipping Control Committee was formed in the theater, to afford the requisite coordination of supply and transportation responsibilities.[20] Its members included the Chief of Staff, Comzone, as chairman, the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4, and, as the representative of the Chief of Transportation, Brig. General Franklin, Chief, Marine Operations Division, OCOT. The Committee was designated as the agency through which all matters involving shipping would be cleared through the War Department. Through action of this committee, requests for the allocation of shipping, originated by G-4 on the basis of tonnage requirements, were scaled down to the estimated capacity for reception. The detailed information which

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

me time past t YT had pa daily om-
plished discharges of v ls, as w l as on forward timates, were
transmitte by radio to the Chief of Transportation, ASF, from the Ship-
pin trol ommitte t five tervals for guidance rogramming

cope of the com ttee' tivity was almost immediately in-
creased when at a conference of Comzone and SOLOC supply and transporta-
tion officers it was agreed that the estimate of ships destined for dis-
charge at Marseilles would be included in the total ship requirements
for the ETO, and would be consolidated in the information dispatched
from the Shipping Control Committee.[22] The committee also had decided
that its cables on shipping sent to the War Department by Comzone head-
quarters, would contain information only on shipping matters.

The shipping difficulties in the ETO seemed well on the way to solu-
tion with the opening of the port of Antwerp on 28 November. However,
for two weeks there was delay in completing the discharge of a consid-
erable number of vessels, because adequate clearance facilities were not
available and the policy of discharging only such cargo as could be

21 On 29 September Maj.Gen. Gross requested of Maj.Gen. Ross more up-to-date information on transportation movements in the theater in order to keep Lt.Gen. Somervell and Gen. Marshall currently informed. On 10 Oct. Maj.Gen. Ross replied that he would send copies of all his daily reports, but that under the stress of operating necessities and more or less living from hand to mouth, the compiling of large reports at frequent intervals was beyond the capacity of his staff. During the following months the Planning Div., OCT, ASF, used the daily theater T.C. reports to show the forward movement of supplies, in weekly reports forwarded to Gen. Marshall, OPD, and Lt.Gen. Somervell.

22 Letter to Maj.Gen. C.P. Gross from Brig.Gen. J.M. Franklin, 11 Dec. 1944. It is interesting to observe that the SHAEF Combined Shipping Authorities were not represented on the Committee, because it was believed that no such representation was required. Radio Cm-in #27848, SHAEF to AGWAR, 28 Jan. 1945.

cleared from the port was in force. Maj. General Ross secured the modification of this policy on 9 December to permit the storage of cargo in the port area, thus enabling completion of discharges from ships at berth. Shortly thereafter the German Ardennes offensive further reduced port clearance capabilities, and led to such heavy storage at Antwerp that the Shipping Control Committee requested the War Department to reduce by 24 sailings the number of vessels scheduled for ensuing convoys.[23]

Such efforts to insure the effective utilization of shipping were nearly offset by a G-4, Comzone, effort to by-pass the committee. During the last week in December, G-4, Comzone, cabled the War Department requesting the dispatch of 240 vessels for February arrival.[24] This cable purported to have received the approval of the Shipping Control Committee, although the T.C. representative, Brig. General Franklin, had refused to concur in its dispatch. The latter learned of the cable by accident, and after he had consulted with the chairman of the committee, Maj.Gen. Lord, it was decided to file an amendatory cable requesting only 188 vessels for February arrival. This number agreed with the theater and the OCT, ASF, estimates of February capacities. Comzone officials also renewed the agreement that in the future all cables setting up ship space requirements would be cleared with the entire Shipping Control Committee, recognizing that repetition of the dispatch of the untoward telegram might undermine Washington confidence in the theater's attempt to establish a realistic shipping program.

Brig. General Franklin believed that by 7 January 1945 the primary

23 Radio Cm-in #22752 from Hqs. Comzone, ETO, to AGWAR, 23 Dec. 1944.

24 Letter to Maj.Gen. C.P. Gross from Brig.Gen. J.M. Franklin, 31 Dec. 1944.

War Department objective of bringing into substantial balance the theater shipping and discharge programs had been accomplished. He pointed to the fact that the number of vessels in the theater with freight from the U.S. had been reduced from 243 (in November) to 99, and he believed that from 95 to 100 vessels in theater represented the minimum number (following each five-day convoy arrival date) necessary for capacity operation.

The OCT, ASF, did not concur in this latter belief, for it reported that it was under continuing pressure to explain the theater need for a constant bank of 40 or more vessels awaiting call from U.K. waters to Continental ports.[25] There also was a special problem in connection with the discharge of the ammunition ships dispatched in response to General Eisenhower's urgent request for larger amounts of ammunition. On 3 January the OCT, ASF, had inquired of the theater whether or not it could handle 500,000 tons of ammunition per month during January and February in view of the fact that during December the theater had discharged only approximately 240,000 tons of ammunition. The theater reply to this inquiry is not available to the author of this monograph, but by the end of February the OCT, ASF, became concerned over the theater's failure to turn around ammunition ships promptly.

On 26 February, theater reports showed that during a 30-day period, of 42 ammunition ships available in the theater, 27 had been held awaiting discharge for from 5 to 15 days.[26] Sixteen of the 27 vessels held contained critical items, and 8 of the vessels were considered "fast

25 Radio Cm-out #90495 to Hqs., Comzone, ETO from OCT, ASF, 11 Jan. 1945.

26 Minutes of Operations Meeting, OCT, ASF, 26 Feb. 1945.

ships" for which there was an urgent need in maintaining the ammunition shipping program. The OCT, ASF, called the theater's attention to these delays in discharge, and secured cooperation in insuring a faster turn-around. In fact, by the end of March the OCT, ASF, was completely satisfied with the shipping and transportation situation in the ETO. The only criticisms offered were in continued theater demands for balanced ship loadings "to compensate for (the theater) deficiency in base depot facilities", and the delay in moving the backlog of supplies in the U.K. to the Continent.[27]

The Port and Supply Movement Program

The Port and Supply Movement Program which became effective 1 January 1945 had the double effect of improving the forward movement of supplies to the Armies and the service forces, and reinforcing the efforts to insure the economical employment of shipping. The Program was carried on under various titles; the official designation was the "Port Operations and Supply Movement Program", although the term Supply Movement Program was commonly employed. All of the titles are somewhat misleading, for since the main objective was the efficient and effective use of all forms of transportation, the movement of personnel also came within the scope of the Program. Its antecedents are found in the work of the Movements Division and the Planning and Control Division, OCOT, during the early period of the campaign on the Continent.

In July 1944 the personnel of the Movement Division, OCOT, tempo-

Personal letter to Maj.Gen. F.S. Ross from Maj.Gen. C.P. Gross, 22 Mar. 1945. War Department efforts had produced assurances from Com-zone and SHAEF headquarters of hearty cooperation in handling shipping problems. Radio Cm-in #27848 to AGWAR from SHAEF, 28 Jan. 1945; and personal letter to Lt.Gen. B. Somervell from Lt.Gen. J.C.H. Lee, 17 Feb. 1945.

rarily attached to the Transportation Section, ADSEC, drew up probably the first overall movement plan prepared on the Continent, and turned it over to ADSEC for operation during August.[28] The rapid advance of the U.S. Armies, however, called for piecemeal rather than overall programming. When the Comzone Headquarters moved to the Continent, as previously mentioned, the Movements Division was re-formed in the OCOT, Comzone, and under this new authority during August the Division coordinated the instructions for rail moves to La-Haye-du-Puits, Lison, Avranches, Le Mans and Chartres. Rail service was established in the Brittany Peninsula during August and the Movements Division coordinated instructions for the movement of supplies and troops over these and other points on the rail lines. By the latter part of the month the Division worked on the emergency program for delivering 100,000 tons of supplies and POL to the Chartres area (in which the Red Ball service was to play so prominent a part), and the higher priority movement of supplies to the armies operating in the Brittany Peninsula.

The work of coordinating and planning specific movements on a somewhat catch-as-catch-can basis gave place during September to preparing more complete and orderly schedules. At that time, the more stabilized conditions in the rear areas, the more adequate rail network placed in operation, the prospects of using inland navigation on an appropriate scale, and the projection of a more orderly depot system forward, equipped with cargo handling facilities which contrasted with conditions at the Normandy dumps, were all conducive to more normal operating methods, well planned ahead of time and carefully controlled to maintain top

28 History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. IV, Section I, p. 7.

efficiency.[29]

It would be more accurate to refer to the principal feature of the planning efforts of the Movements Division as the preparation and periodic revision of forecasts of available inland transportation facilities. For example, effective 28 September, a new movements schedule or forecast called for the discontinuance at Paris of truck routes from the west, and the transfer of supplies from trucks onto rail cars for movement forward to Army railheads. The truck routes stopping at Paris were to be supplemented by rail deliveries to Army railheads from both the Normandy and Brittany Peninsulas. This forecast was not completely followed in practice, and it was almost immediately revised by the publication of a new forecast to become effective 1 October. The revision, illustrated in the chart on the following page, was prepared to facilitate the planning and programming of supply movements of G-4, Comzone, and it subsequently was revised for each 15 day period.[30]

The actual programming of the tonnage to be moved over the combined truck and rail system took place at a meeting held every night under the auspices of G-4, Comzone, and with representatives of the various services present.[31] At this meeting bids were accepted from the supply services to fill the daily allocations to each Army of the available transportation lift.[32] These were put in the daily program, given a priority

29 Ibid, p. 30.

30 Consolidated Operational Report on T.C. Activities in the ETO, from May 1942 through V-E Day, Annex #1, p. 7. The forecast included the publication of charts, tables and necessary instructions or information.

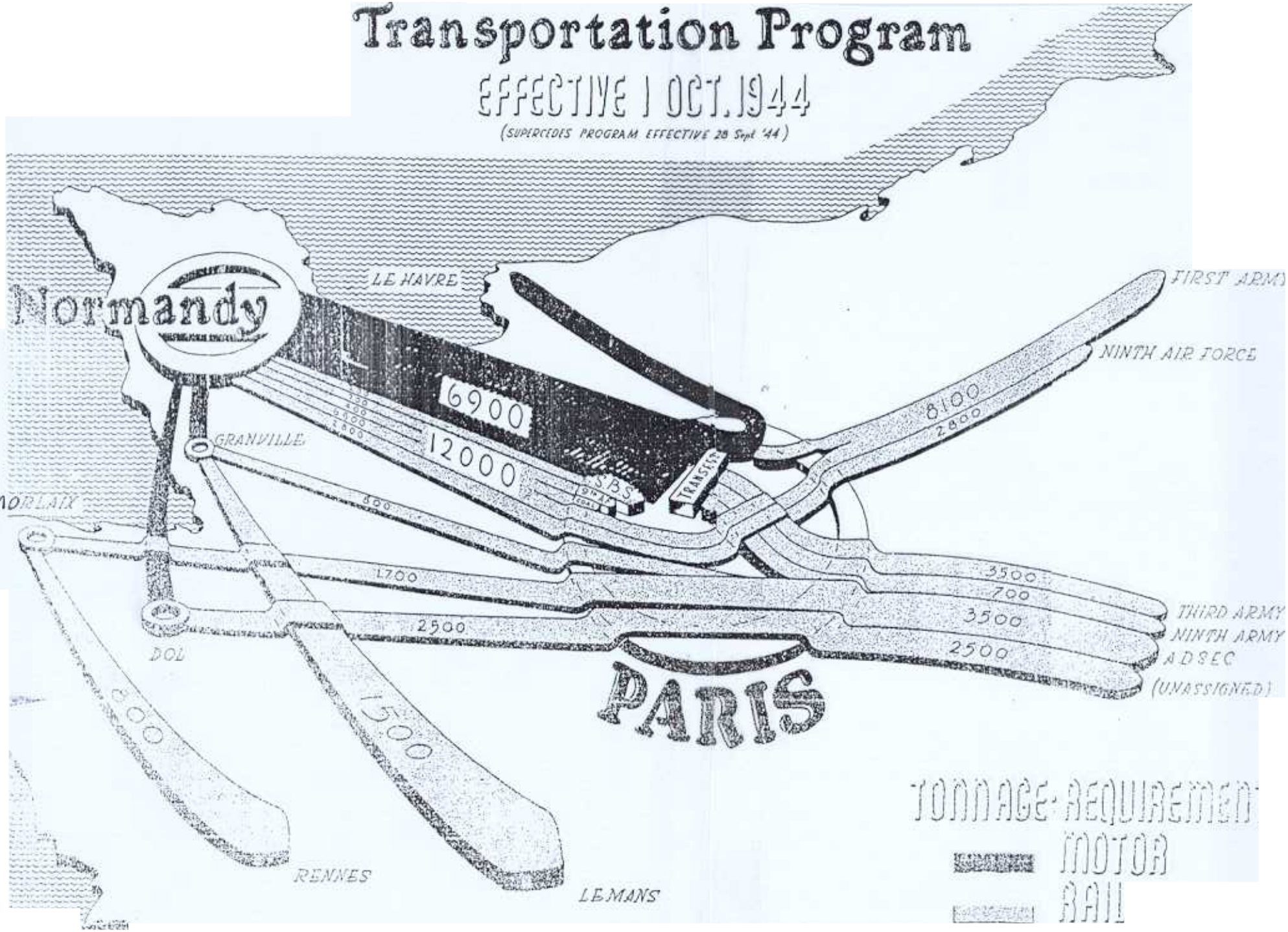
31 Report of the General Board, USFET, Transportation Section, Study #124, p. 1.

32 The amount allocated to each Army was decided by 12th Army Group Headquarters.

Transportation Program

EFFECTIVE 1 OCT. 1944

(SUPERCEDES PROGRAM EFFECTIVE 28 Sept '44)



and forwarded to base section depots, ports and beach dumps for movement commencing 30 hours after the meeting. This system of priority allocations continued in effect until December 1944, and was carried out under G-4, Comzone, to the extent that the latter effected or controlled transport activities to a marked degree, despite the fact that technical control of all movements from ships to railheads and Army dumps was placed in the OCOT.

It has been pointed out that the prime requisite for an effective overall movement program was "a more proper delineation between the activities of G-4, Comzone, and the supply services on the one hand and the T.C. on the other."[33] During the fall of 1944 friction and confusion in the division of responsibilities "were more frequent than healthy", but subsequently there was steady improvement in the degree of cooperation and progressive improvement in correcting "staff procedure as to the realms of command and technical supervision."[34] In other words, the OCOT was given progressively the opportunity to supervise the functions which lay within its sphere of responsibility.

The acquisition of increasing control of the means of transportation was accompanied by the growing importance of the Movements Division forecasts, and enlarged responsibilities and effectiveness in the work of the Control and Planning Division, OCOT. For instance, as the line of communication from the beach and port depots to the front line became extended, plans were developed for clearing cargo directly from ships' side to intermediate and forward depots.[35] Forward depots were located in the

33 History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, p. 6.

34 Ibid, p. 8.

35 Ibid, pp. 30-31.

Liege-Charleroi and the Revigny-Verdun areas, while intermediate depots were to be located near Paris and in the area northwest of Paris around Soisson and Rheims. The Movements Division forecast for 1-15 November, with its accompanying directives for implementing the program, provided detailed instructions or information as to the location of depots and the responsibilities of the Transportation Corps, the Comzone headquarters, the supply services, the port commanders, the base section commanders and the regulating stations.[36] The forecast afforded a helpful medium for effecting the transition from the former to the new program. Nevertheless, the plans for the establishment and employment of intermediate depots was only partially realized during 1944, as subsequent discussion will emphasize.

Contributions of the Control and Planning Division

Meanwhile, the Control and Planning Division, OCOT, had become increasingly important in providing for more economical and efficient employment of transportation facilities, and in insuring advanced planning for supply and personnel movements. Working closely with the Movements Division, as early as September the Control and Planning Division had paid particular attention to scheduling regular daily train movements from the ports with the necessary attention to spotting, loading and supervising the trains.[37] It was believed that maintenance of regular schedules would mean that every one concerned, that is, the dock personnel, the loading personnel of the services, the truck dispatchers and the Military Railway Service would know what they had to work with and

36 Ibid, pp. 33-34.

37 Ibid, pp. 4-5.

when, and become accustomed to a regular routine. Late in September it had been discovered at Cherbourg (a discovery which held true for other areas as well), that trucks were being wasted because loading points were irregular and not adequately supervised. Demands for trucks and railway cars had fluctuated so that agencies were never sure, on the one hand, how many they would furnish, and on the other, how many they would get

The scheduling of regular train movements from Cherbourg was increased during October and also the program for rail movement out of the Brittany Peninsula. In implementing the schedules the Control and Planning Division, OCOT, coordinated the work of the Transportation Officers of the Normandy and Brittany Base Sections, and also coordinated with the French railway authorities. New schedules were adopted on 15 October and periodically thereafter as additional facilities became available and requirements changed. These schedules were fitted into the monthly overall tonnage forecasts prepared by the Movements Division.

The improvements inaugurated by the Control and Planning Division in October 1944 had produced an immediate increase in the amount of nage moved, an amount which rapidly rose to a sustained increase of o 50 percent.[38] The basic principle on which the Division operated was the reduction of approximately 80 percent of the daily supply movement to a standard operating procedure, with daily changes limited to 20 percent or less for special requirements. The Division believed that its policy "proved to be one of the utmost importance" in the theater.

To become fully effective, the Division policy had to be accompanied by improvements in two other fields, namely the number and location of

38 Consolidated Operational Report of the T.C. in the ETO, Annex #1, p. 7.

depots and the allocation of ships to Continental ports.[39] A full analysis of the Comzone depot policy on the Continent lies outside the scope of this monograph, although that policy had a marked effect on transportation activities. The establishment of dumps and depots in Normandy early in the European campaign had been followed by the Armies' advance in 42 days a distance (400 miles) which, according to plan, was to have taken 270 days. There was not sufficient time to establish intermediate depots or dumps during that period, and subsequently there was no great effort to accomplish that end. This fact was commented on adversely by Maj. General LeR. Lutes, Chief of Operations Division, ASF, in December 1944 and Lt. General B. Somervell in January 1945.[40]

The OCOT believed that during the last quarter of 1944 the theater should have established a basic depot plan which would include an adequate number of base depots for the quick reception of cargo from ship discharge and port clearance; intermediate depots where cargo from base

39 Changes also were necessary in the system of allocating tonnage to the several U.S. Armies. During the fall of 1944 the 12th Army Group Headquarters had determined the amount of tonnage lift which should be assigned to each Army, and Comzone had determined priorities of movement on service bids for tonnage within the assigned lift. A Q.M. study of November 1944 showed that as the amount of Comzone rail and truck transport facilities improved, continued allocation of tonnage limits by the Group Headquarters deprived Comzone of using its transportation most effectively. Furthermore, the Armies were reluctant, in certain instances, to relinquish their tonnage allocations to other Armies or to ADSEC, and in consequence brought in certain supplies in quantities far greater than their authorized levels or their actual needs. This condition also served to prevent the effective use of transportation. History of the General Purpose Vehicle, 1941-1945, ETO, op.cit., Vol. III, quoting the Minutes of a meeting in the office of G-4, Comzone, 21 Nov. 1944.

40 Ibid, Vol. III, pp. 564 and 574. Lt. General Somervell also compared unfavorably the handling of U.S. transportation matters in western Europe with those in southern France, as well as in the British zone. He recommended abolition of the Transportation Section, G-4, Comzone and the placing of greater reliance on the OCOT, Comzone.

depots could be translated into items; and issue depots or forward dumps where "wanted" items were received from intermediate depots on the basis of requisitions or requests, for issue to the combat troops.[41] But Comzone depots, especially during the last quarter of 1944, were inadequate for receiving and handling incoming supplies. They were unable to receive cargo from ships rapidly enough to avoid blocking up ports; they lacked adequate siding and track capacity and other facilities for prompt turnaround of railway cars and trucks; and they were improperly located with respect to the entire transportation network and the axis of advance.

The Chief of Transportation, ASF, agreed with the OCOT, Comzone, on the value of establishing and maintaining an appropriate depot system. During the latter part of October he also wondered if ASF compliance with the Service of Supply demand in the U.K. for more and more detailed information on ships' manifests to facilitate distribution of cargo from shipside to the various small depots located throughout England, was not responsible for Comzone's using ships as storage as base depots instead of establishing such depots on land.[42] The Chief of Transportation, ASF, stated that there simply was not enough available shipping to permit such a practice.

The Comzone policy, however, as explained in an earlier footnote, had been largely determined by the belief that the European war would be terminated before 1945. In fact, Comzone had been directed by SHAEF not to build a large depot area in the Seine district, and the SHAEF staff and the 12th Army Group staff had been so optimistic of the tactical sit-

41 Consolidated Operational Report of the T.C. in the ETO, Annex #1, p. 8.

42 Personal letter to Maj.Gen. F.S. Ross from Maj.Gen. C.P. Gross, 24 Oct. 1944.

uation in the fall of 1944 that no large intermediate depots were planned or provided then.[43] This optimism as a factor in determining Comzone policies, is emphasized in the General Board (USFET) report of Supply and Maintenance on the European Continent, Study #130. Nevertheless, the OCOT had urged the establishment of a more complete depot system on the Continent as a means of facilitating transportation operations, and ultimately, with prolongation of the campaign into 1945 and at the prompting of ASF officials, a more adequate number of depots was placed in operation. Their usefulness was then amply demonstrated, particularly during the period of the Rhine crossing and the advance into Germany.[44]

The other factor requiring change, as mentioned above, was the manner of allocating ships to ports. As the Control and Planning Division, OCOT, endeavored to improve the methods of programming the forward movement of supplies, it found that from a transportation standpoint, it was advisable not only to make the maximum use of all available ports but also to discharge supplies as near inland depots as possible in order to maintain land haul at a minimum. Consequently, the OCOT was gradually permitted to play a more prominent role in the G-4, Comzone, scheme of allocating ships to Continental ports during the latter part of 1944.[45]

The failure of the Allied November drive to achieve a breakthrough across the Rhine, and the opening of the port of Antwerp to Allied operation brought to a head the relationship between the OCOT and G-4, Comzone, and the methods of controlling incoming shipping and land movements.

43 History of the General Purpose Vehicle in the ETO, 1941-1945, op.cit., Vol. III, p. 564, quoting a report to General Eisenhower prepared by Maj.Gen. LeR. Lutes, 25 Dec. 1944.

44 Consolidated Operational Report of the T.C. in the ETO, Annex #1, p. 9.

45 History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, p. 6.

A few days prior to the opening of Antwerp, the OCOT forwarded Lt. General Lee a review of prospective Continental transportation capabilities, and a recommendation for establishing a Supply Movement Program, making maximum use of the shorter line of communication north and east of the Seine River.[46] After lengthy and sometimes acrimonious discussion, early in December it was decided that the Chief of Transportation, Comzone, would be entirely responsible for preparing a monthly Port Operations and Supply Movement Program.[47] The Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4, Comzone, was assigned responsibility for indicating Continental destinations, available tonnages and priorities of supply movement, while the Chief of Transportation was given a free hand in accomplishing the movement as required. In other words, the programming of supplies on a daily basis by G-4, Comzone, with its attending difficulty in predicting to both shippers and the carrying agencies sufficiently far in advance the transportation requirements of all shipping points, was abandoned in favor of an enlarged forecast (formerly prepared by the Movements Division) developed into an overall program prepared and controlled by the Control and Planning Division, OCOT, for the Chief of Transportation.

Preparing Supply Movement Programs

The techniques for preparing the monthly program in many respects resembled the preparation of the Movements Division's monthly forecasts of transportation facilities, but because of certain differences and the

46 Memo to the C.G., Comzone, ETO, c/o Lt.Gen. J.C.H. Lee from Maj.Gen. F.S. Ross, 24 Nov. 1944. Ibid, Chap. III, Section on 13th Major Port, Appendix 10.

47 Consolidated Operational Report of the T.C. in the ETO, Annex #1, p. 9; Report of the General Board, USFET, Transportation Section, Study #124, p. 1.

importance of the new system, the latter warrants recapitulation. When G-4, Comzone, had consolidated the requirements of the services it forwarded them to the Control and Planning Division, OCOT.[48] The latter consulted the Marine Operations Division regarding port discharge capacities, and later charged it with carrying out the details of discharge. For port clearance and the movement of cargo from ports to base depots and thence to forward depots and railheads, the Control and Planning Division consulted the Movements Division and the carriers the 2nd MRS, the Motor Transport Service and the Inland Waterways Division — as to the breakdown of cargo between them. Special consideration had to be given the movement of coal, POL and personnel.

When this preliminary work was completed the overall plan was laid out in tables, diagrams and maps and forwarded to G-4, Comzone, for approval. After approval was received, the Program was published by the OCOT, with a directive from the Commanding General, Comzone, to all concerned in its implementation. The OCOT included complete technical instructions with the other published information, all of which was issued on the 25th of the month preceding the period in which the program would be operative.

The first program issued 25 December 1944 to take effect 1 January, is shown in the accompanying chart. It was generally recognized that the program could not be carried out in detail, but it was considered that it could be used as a general guide for the supervision of freight movements.[49]

[48] History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, pp. 6-7 and 11-13. See also Procedure for Planning the Reception, Outloading and Movement of Supplies, Personnel and Equipment, Appendix 13 to Short Report on Important Transportation Developments in the ETO, 16 June 1945.

[49] General Board Report, USFET, Transportation Section, Study #124, p. 2.

Accordingly various changes were made in preparing subsequent programs, as later discussion will show. However, the authority of the OCOT was gradually expanded in ways that should be summarized now.

As a means of insuring allocation of vessels in accordance with the Supply Movement Program, and reducing vessel turnaround time, in February a Diversion Committee was formed with the Chief, Control and Planning Division, OCOT, as chairman. Its membership included representatives of the Marine Operations and the Movements Divisions, OCOT, the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4, Comzone, and the technical services.[50] These meetings adjusted the desires of the services as stated by their representatives, with the traffic conditions at supply depots and the backlog of shipments at the ports for these depots. In other words, the system provided a means of adjusting the Supply Movement Program with the actual arrival of tonnages on ships, and eliminated or reduced delays incident to holding vessels in U.K. waters awaiting call to the Continent.

When the control of the Supply Movement Program was placed in the hands of the Chief of Transportation, Comzone, the power to embargo shipments to depots remained with G-4, Comzone.[51] Therefore, to a certain extent, the sensitivity of the control provided by the system was nullified by delays involved in going through general staff channels to obtain action when depots became overcrowded with rail cars, barges or trucks. An adjustment of authority was provided later so that when it appeared necessary to the Chief of Transportation or to a base section Transportation Officer to embargo a depot, the base section Transportation Officer

50 Ibid; and letter to Maj.Gen. C.P. Gross from Brig.Gen. J.M. Franklin, 19 Jan. 1944.

51 General Board Report, USFET, Transportation Section, Study #124, p. 2.

concerned was requested to have the base section Commander forward a request to the Commanding General, Comzone, to have an embargo placed on the depot. An information copy was sent to the Chief of Transportation, who then took immediate action without awaiting confirming orders to be issued by G-4, Comzone.

The monthly Movement Supply Program also proved to be inadequate in controlling inter-depot movements, since these varied from day to day in accordance with shifting supply availabilities and requisitions.[52] The curtailment of such movements became increasingly necessary as railway trains were operated into Germany, thereby creating a temporary shortage of freight cars at ports and in rear areas. Since depots were one of the principal creators of empty freight cars, the effect of uncontrolled (by the OCOT) inter-depot movements was to give depots first priority in obtaining empty rail cars or desired shipments.

A solution was finally worked out whereby it was agreed to curtail drastically the inter-depot movements program and to require all non-programmed moves to be cleared through the Chief of Transportation, coordinating with G-4, Comzone. Later, it was required that all non-programmed movements in excess of 150 tons per week (whether initial movement, reconsignment or diversion) between two storage points should be cleared through the Chief of Transportation. The latter, then taking the position that the movement program represented the maximum commitment of the transportation system, insisted that the technical service concerned eliminate an equivalent tonnage from its program before the non-programmed movement would be authorized.

52 Ibid, pp. 2-3.

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there was the more operative liaison maintained by the Control and Planning Division with 21st Army Group at Brussels and at the OCOT in Paris through American and British liaison officers.

There was steadily improving cooperation between the OCOT and G-4, Comzone, during the first part of 1945, and increasingly effective relations between the T.C. and the other technical services. Moreover, the staffs of both the 12th and the 6th Army Groups included a Colonel from the T.C. in their G-4 sections, and these officers were in constant contact with and made frequent visits to the OCOT in Paris.[55] Through them the Control and Planning Division settled questions regarding railway car unloading at Army depots and future requirements for extra personnel movements by truck.

Other OCOT divisions were not deprived of access to G-4, Comzone, and the technical services, but the Supply Movements Program did bring about more centralization of contact in the Control and Planning Division. No changes in the Program were possible without the concurrence of this Division. The effect was to give unity to T.C. relations with outside agencies, and to diminish duplication of activity by divisions working along parallel lines.

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55 History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. V, Part 1, Chap. II, p. 8.

XIV. IMPLEMENTING THE SUPPLY MOVEMENT PROGRAM

The Port Operations and Supply Movement Program inaugurated 1 January 1945 was of tremendous significance to the Transportation Corps in the European Theater. The Program touched so many phases of transportation and supply activities, that in the interest of providing pertinent and graphic details, as well as shortening the period devoted to research, it seems appropriate to present extracts from the theater account of the implementation of the Program. This chapter, therefore, is extracted, or paraphrased, almost entirely from a T.C. historical report prepared well after the European campaign was concluded.[1] In presenting this account, an effort has been made to avoid as far as possible duplication of information contained in the preceding chapter of this monograph, but a certain amount of repetition is necessary to the proper understanding of the topics discussed herein.

With the publication of the first overall Supply Movement Program, ships were allocated to ports by the T.C., in consultation with the services, rather than by the services themselves or by G-4. This assured two essentials: first, that demands on ports were kept in line with their capacities, and secondly, that the land haul was held to a minimum and backhauling, so time-consuming and wagon-wasting, was substantially reduced. A minimum number of main supply channels between ports and depots, or intermediate and advance sections, was set up to maintain the greatest possible regularity in shipments, and to aid rail, wagon, truck and barge turnaround. Base section commanders were directed to see that

[1] History of the T.C. in the ETO, Vol. VI, Part 1, Chap. II, pp. 60ff. A considerable amount of additional information on the topic is contained in other sections of the same volume.

car loading and scheduling details at ports, and similar efficiency factors at depots, were carried out with dispatch, under T.C. supervision.

Monthly Conferences Held by OCOT

Toward the end of each month, a conference was held in Paris at which OCOT officials explained the Program, against the background of the tactical and overall supply situation and forecast, to port and base section Transportation Officers, and their practical comments and suggestions were heard. Despite occasional wagon shortages caused by lack of French cooperation,[2] misestimates by depots of their own unloading capacities, and "the old Army game" of regarding railway cars as "rolling warehouses"; despite the hail of buzz-bombs at Antwerp and Liege, which required hauling vast quantities of ammunition from Le Havre and Cherbourg; despite the length of the line of communications from Marseilles and the shortage of ships which came to pass in late February; even despite the barrier of the Rhine, the execution of the plan during February and March, brought the movement of tonnages beyond expectation.

The principal advocate for an overall plan was its author, Colonel Hugh A. Murrill, Chief, Control and Planning Division, OCOT. Some of his observations on the Supply Movement Program, given at the 29 January Conference of pertinent T.C. officers, are of interest:

> "It had become apparent that the theoretical statements of depot capacity were unattainable in performance. Depots, in most cases, did not have adequate siding capacity nor team tracks to carry on a two-way movement in and out daily. It became necessary to establish a program that would insure an even flow of rail wagons and trucks to the depot to keep it working at capacity each day and at the same time avoided delays and accumulation of rolling

[2] Theater reports refer to a French tendency to use railway cars for hauling civilian freight rather than U.S. Army freight.

stock or trucks at the depot. The plan for the monthly Supply Movement Program developed by the Chief of Transportation provided for:

a. Allocation of shipping to ports within the capacity of the port.

b. Allocation of shipping to ports to move supplies into Continental depots with minimum requirements for land transport.

c. A regulated and even flow of supplies in and out of depots within the capabilities of the depots.

d. The establishment of daily target figures for ports, depots, railways, inland waterways and motor transport service so that all concerned had an opportunity to adjust personnel and equipment for the accomplishment of the daily target."

At the regularly scheduled Shipping Diversion Committee meetings, the service representatives bidding for transportation were equipped with information covering the breakdown, by commodity and type, of the bulk class-of-supply tonnage figures they had previously communicated to the OCOT. They also carried in their folders, a list of the particular depots to which it was desired that these goods be consigned, as well as alternate depots. Finally, they were informed as to what port was preferred for each ship carrying their cargo. All their requests were based on the Monthly Supply Movement Program in which regular channels from ports to depots, depots to railheads, had been established, and average tonnages for these channels outlined.

The officers of the OCOT who had studied the Cargo Disposal Instructions (CDI's), or briefs of same, considered the capabilities of the ports and depots and their situation with regard to meeting the targets set by the program. They also had ideas as to how many vessels should make the respective ports, and where particular cargoes should be discharged in order to insure most economical land hauls. The Chief, Control and Plan-

ning Division, arbitrated what few disputes arose, requesting in some cases that the service representatives inform their offices regarding the considerations which led to changing cargo dispositions to depots, or rejecting the proposed ports for certain ships. These meetings also had the unofficial, but very desirable, result of "clearing the air" on general questions which rose between the T.C. and other services.

The Supply Movement Program was not issued as a directive without review. Not only was there discussion of it by the directors who would have to carry it out, but also at the January Conference the Divisions of OCOT were told by Colonel Traub, Deputy Chief of Transportation, to review the plan for February carefully and submit their opinion as to whether or not the program could be met. Attention was invited to the fact that, so far as discharge alone was concerned, a total daily tonnage of 50,000 tons would be necessary each and every day of the month. This figure included all types of general cargo, both commodity loaded vessels or U.K.-loaded, including coasters, refrigerator ships, organizational equipment, and coal.

Summarizing the requirements for February at the 29 January Conference, Colonel Murrill stated that there had been 300,000 men moved in during January, and that it was necessary to allow for at least that number in the forthcoming month. Each troop train was considered the equivalent of a freight train carrying 400 tons of goods, and thus fitted into the Supply Movements picture. It was planned to discharge during February, 40,000 tons of cargo daily, to clear from the ports 48,000 tons, and to ship from intermediate depots to forward depots and railheads 38,000 tons. At the meeting Colonel Murrill expressed regret to

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.tl tha irit lom of ion so characteristic of he American, an so healthy in any organization, one of the port officer plied that the wire mes ges from aris had little meaning. If they could discharge the ship they did, if not The Chief, Control and Planning Division, replied evenly, that since these special requests and orders generally got results, it was immaterial whether or not the were well-regarded.

An officer of high-rank was heard to remark to a small group that the ield man could not help but become tongue-tied when he entered the "halls of the mighty" at the OCOT building in Paris. If this was true in some instances, it was not characteristic of the monthly meeting, which brought orth free discussion. In some cases, objections that were put forward were suavely but firmly overruled. In most instances, explanations of policy and procedure were carefully made and assurances given of investigation and action on particularly difficult problems plaguing the RTOs.

New tonnages were constantly appearing to be handled and incorporated into the planning. The settlement of Belgian labor strikes early in February brought to the attention of the Control and Planning Division the fact that three-fourths of the coal being mined in liberated Europe originated in the Comzone area, and posed movement roblems for

which allowances must be made.

When Maj. General Ross paid an inspection visit to Normandy Base Section in late February, he encountered a situation which might have been found in any of the field agencies. The base section T.C. officers requested that additional allowance be made in the Program for: (1) TBA ships (ships carrying Table of Basic Allowances equipment); (2) Coal; (3) French rearmament and civil imports. Despite the fact that they were losing operating personnel to the Infantry and to other non-transport activities, the transportation officers of the base sections were constantly obliged to handle new classes of material for which allowance had not been made in the Program.

Furthermore, Maj. General Ross found that the different port commanders were unloading tremendous amounts of T/E equipment, mail and various other unprogrammed items. He requested that those items be included in the Program to the extent feasible, and that they certainly appear in the OCOT report to Control Section, Comzone, ETO, so that some credit would be given for their handling. Both inclusions were immediately accomplished.

The Problem of French Shipments

French rearmament and civil aid were large items in themselves. As late as 5 July 1944 high-level planning did not contemplate any more rearmament than for 140,000 in battalion-size units. However, by 25 January 1945 it had been settled that American-British efforts, with the U.S. taking the heavier role, would supply several hundred thousand French troops. This was to be accomplished mainly by furnishing raw ma-

terials for French manufacture, but also by some shipment of finished goods.

The American prediction that French civil discharge could not begin until well into February was correct. Two Liberty ships with initial supplies arrived in a convoy of 17 February, but the river was filled with ice from the February thaw, and movement to Paris could not begin until 24 February. Eighteen vessels were scheduled for March, some to discharge at Marseilles, where the civil needs had been allotted both rail and barge facilities for clearance. Readjustments in allocations for military goods were described as firm, providing the French plans went as expected - an indication that the French plans had an important bearing on the whole Movement Program.

The Conference at the end of February produced some information regarding achievements. At the end of August 1944, there had been only one train daily to Paris. In December the daily delivery had been 27,000 tons; in January, 32,000 tons; and for the first 22 days of February, the daily average had been over 42,500 tons.

With the approach of the final offensive, it was realized that every effort would have to be bent toward relieving the overworked rail system, and, at the same time, rigidly conserving trucks for emergency motor lines of communication. Brig. General Stewart, then one of the two Deputy Chiefs of Transportation, was working out a plan for making empty rail cars more quickly available to ports, but it was feared the problem would never be solved until the French could be persuaded to stay within a civil movements program, as embraced in the Comzone Supply Program. Unfortunately, it was impossible to confine French shipments to

an assigned amount, due partly, it was said, to the individualistic Frenchman's dislike of an overall program. Also, the half of France where there were no U.S. installations continued to move freight and passengers to and from the American occupied areas without regard for the Program, which made for greater confusion.

The problem of cars increased with the expansion of the rearmament and civil imports program, which the U.S. authorities were charged with continually increasing. For March, 18 civil affairs ships were planned, and the southbound French tonnage on the Seine alone was 5,000 tons daily.

The March Supply Movements Program

The March Supply Program presented difficulties; 59,000 tons were to move every day from ports inland to the depots, and 43,000 from depots to troops. The new depot area being set up around Metz-Nancy-Luneville would have to be stocked, and the French were clamoring for the building up of their rearmament depot area, scheduled for Lyon. The state of the northern roads meant large quantities of crushed stone would have to be moved, if U.S. Army trucking was to be effective. Food and raw materials would have to be delivered to the French for their basic needs.

The inbound supply movement was shown graphically on a colored chart. Main depot areas were shown as circles divided into segments, the color of each segment corresponding to the color of a given port, indicating what proportion of the receipts of each area were to be from each port. Verdun, the most centrally located depot area, received more

tonnage from Antwer than from Cherbourg or Marseilles, because of strict adherence to the law of shortest possible landhaul. Its Cherbourg tonnage was, however, greater than that from Le Havre or Rouen, because the latter ports specialized in particular products. The Mons-Charleroi circle showed a large wedge of Cherbourg green, notwithstanding Le Havre, Rouen, Ghent, and Antwerp were closer ports, because of a new arrangement under which some ships were lightened at Cherbourg to the 23½-foot draft required to enter Ghent. This Belgian port was close to the northern front and unhindered by buzz-bombs, but since most of the vessels destined there were commodity-loaded, hence deeper in the water than the usual draft, enough cargo had to be discharged at Cherbourg to enable a vessel to enter Ghent.

Earlier circumstances had dictated that ships from the U.S. with Ghent allocation lighten at Le Havre. Reviewing this practice, it was found that much ship time could be saved by using Cherbourg, no longer under the pressure which it had felt earlier. Vessels had been putting into the Solent, the Southampton roadstead, then making up into a convoy for Le Havre. After lightening there, they had been obliged to resail to the Solent to join a convoy to Ghent, since there was no convoying directly between the mouth of the Seine and the Scheldt port. By lightening at Cherbourg, then proceeding via the Solent to Ghent, considerable ship time was saved.

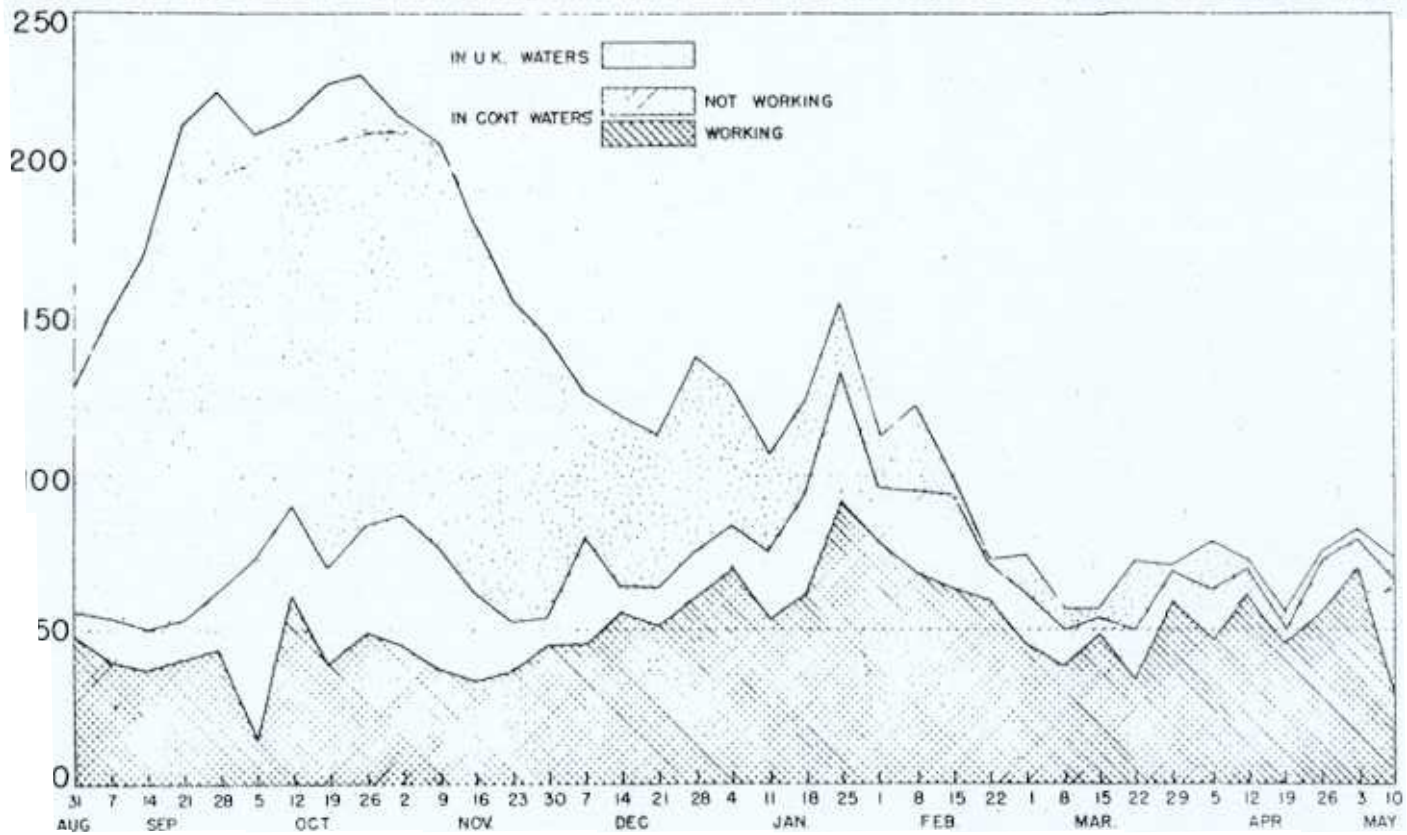
By 31 March many depots on the Continent were filled to 90 percent of capacity. For the previous two and one-half months G-4, Comzone, had promised that additional depots would soon be prepared, but somehow the program had been delayed, hence the filling up of existing depots. A

new SOP had been adopted, but not completely implemented, providing for base, intermediate and forward depots. The base depots were to be located near ports and receive ship discharge immediately, thus keeping the vessels working constantly, maintaining the ports free of congestion, and obviating the necessity of forwarding supplies directly over the lines of communication to the front. The base depots were to hold 50 percent of the imports. The other 50 percent would be sent forward promptly, 30 percent to be held in intermediate (or filler) depots, and 20 percent in forward (or issue) depots. Requisitions on the base depots would be drawn by the intermediate depots, based on stated Army requirements for a given period, thus assuring that only what was likely to be needed would use the crowded lines of communication. Supplies at the forward depots would be based on requisitions of the Armies, geared to a 10-day cycle. Certain key depots would be strategically located and carry the entire stock of certain items, the nature of which required central stockage.

These plans were highly desirable from the T.C. point of view, and insofar as depots were erected, the plans worked well so long as the movement was forward. There were certain drawbacks, however, when in an effort to keep the stocks looking good on reports, the services insisted on cross-hauling between depots or failed to designate cargo for the depots nearest the best port for the ship involved. The Control and Planning Division constantly warned against "over-sorting", or consigning cars to a depot where their contents would merely be unloaded, rearranged slightly, reloaded and sent on.

The main criticism of the Supply Movement Program was that it tried

U.S. COMMODITY-LOADED SHIPS IN U.K. AND CONTINENTAL WATERS



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to see too far ahead. The Services were not able to anticipate demands for a whole month, and so had to make frequent alterations to their original bids. Tactical changes, decisions of the French and Belgians, events occurring in other theaters and the zone of interior, all caused unforeseen changes in the flow of supplies and the facilities for movement. Since the supply demands were based on 10-day programs, a bi-monthly Program was favored by many, and the rather wholesale amendments to the Program in the early part of the month pointed to this as a desirable expedient.

Granting the validity of this criticism, the manner in which the actual tonnages approached the targets showed that the sights had not been set too high. And the increase in tons moved, without proportionate increase in movement facilities, also stands as proof of the advantages gained.

The Supply Program and the Ports

Much has been said already about ports, but it is pertinent to examine further their role in the Movements Program. In a letter of 27 December, Colonel Murrill reminded G-4, Comzone, that tonnage was tied up at the four major ports, and asked for a decision on the full use of Ghent to reduce the ammunition and vehicle burden on Cherbourg and Le Havre, and the coaster rush on Le Havre and Rouen. A follow-up letter of 3 January requested again that approval be given on Ghent. It was believed that this port must be used, if Le Havre-Rouen were to be freed of some tonnage and thus enabled to handle a large increase in personnel movements, as desired by Comzone. Ghent was pressed into service by the last week in January and performed with yeomanlike ability.

In mid-January, port congestion became such that a cable was prepared requesting a cut-back of ten ships against the number planned for February. However, by going into the problem with Marine Operations Division, OCOT, and discussing it at a Comzone meeting on 21 January, it was found better to divert these vessels to the Mediterranean, and to plan for the diversion of twenty in March. Colonel Fuller, Executive, OCOT, who was much involved in Control and Planning work at the time, was requested by Colonel Traub to explore this possibility, and advise how many troops would be needed for the job if only port clearance would be required at Mediterranean ports, and how many would be necessary to haul the cargoes directly to the northern area of the Communication Zone. Colonel Fuller's estimate for twenty ships was as follows: for port clearance, twelve truck companies, two truck battalion headquarters, one truck group headquarters, one traffic regulating group; for the haul north, one railway operating battalion, 55 locomotives, 5,000 rail cars. Those demands were based on discharging and moving 3,000 tons daily.

The February program featured the reduction of port backlogs at a rate of about 4,700 tons per day, in an attempt to restore a liquid condition. It again attacked the problem of diversified movement channels, limiting further the number of depots to which a particular port had to ship. Port men were informed that the OCOT was making every effort to get Comzone Headquarters to expedite barge unloading at Liege and Brussels, so that Antwerp's discharge would not be adversely affected. It was estimated that port to depot movement alone, for all ports, would require 43,000 rail wagons.

In answer to a criticism of the planning raised by one of the port

officers, the Chief, Control and Planning Division, OCOT, stated that it had never been contemplated that whole trainloads would be loaded at shipside to run directly to specific Army dumps. By calling for the scheduling of discharge to match clearance to specific destinations, it was intended that certain tracks of the marshalling areas be designated for rail cars which later would be shunted to the quays where goods for particular destinations were discharged. By thus earmarking cars for particular quays and particular supplies, car grabbing would be avoided and their prompt and orderly movement to shipside assured.

The port from which this criticism emanated had exceeded its program in January. Such a performance, when done without due consideration of all installation needs, was almost as grave an error as falling short of target. The additional discharge had not been, could not be, allowed for in rail car allotments, and a shortage of empties inevitably followed, with the result that large amounts of ammunition had to be dumped on the ground in and near the port area, without proper provisions for the protection of the goods or the welfare of the men who worked in the vicinity of it.

Another type of complaint came from the Antwerp Transportation Officer who stated that he had been receiving consistently only three-fourths of the number of cars he had requested from the railway services, and that this number often was made up of types unsuitable for the particular loads he had planned to put on them. Wrong-type cars stemmed from several causes. The Belgians and French "borrowed" extensively the types of cars which were in greatest demand by the U.S. Armies. The Armies preferred box cars and gondolas to flats, since they were more suit-

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rat ıave ships de tined for lischarge most of their fuel and water into tankers at Le Havre thus allowing them to proceed up-river with greater dispatch and more Rouen cargo. The 'ort Commander Le lavre was instructed to give bert iority to ships lightenin to make the i-monthly high tide for ou He was directed that, if necessary, he should put partially discharged Le Havre ships at anchor to make room at the docks for the Rouen ships, so vital was it that the latter should not miss the tide and leave the Rouen stevedores and railway men empty-handed.

On 26 February, it was estimated that the number of ships left over from February, and impinging on the March program, would be approximately 86. This was not a bad figure, considering the fact that the Theater was working 300 ships a month. The March program planned for 311 ships. Total tonnage movement, exclusive of coal and POL, would be 1,670,000 tons. Le Havre and Rouen together would get 40 ammunition ships, while 18 were allocated under the Cherbourg-Ghent arrangement. There were to be 73 vehicle ships.

Minor changes from the February program included scheduling ten vehicle ships for the new assembly plant at Rouen, and less diversion of vehicle ships from Marseilles to Antwerp, in order to utilize the Ford plant's capacity and save land movement. There was otherwise little change for Marseilles. Antwerp was booked for 129 ships, notwithstanding its Transportation Officer's plea in early January that 85 was the limit. Two of these ships were of a new category: GPA's (General Purchasing Agents), laden with sheet steel and raw cotton from which French and Belgian fabricators would fashion goods for American Army use.

By early March one quarter of the dockage facilities at Le Havre were allotted to the French for civil and military imports. Clearance in the American operated part of the port had picked up due to the increased use of German POWs, who were more efficient and ambitious, generally, than the French civilians employed.

As March closed, the month's work and that in store for the ports in April, could be reviewed. The April program was considered difficult but feasible. Rouen would have to clear four to five additional trains per day, and Ghent, seven. The allocations had been designed towards shutting down Cherbourg and easing up on Le Havre, adding more to Rouen and making maximum use of Antwerp and Ghent, nearest the front. With the lessening of buzz-bomb attacks on Antwerp, it was thought the Scheldt quays might take some bomb unloading, if the other ports found theirs full. Ghent had done well on its new ammunition assignment. Antwerp had reached the all-time high for an European port - 30,000 tons of cargo per day. However, all ports except Marseilles still had backlogs to clear.

During March all port commanders were advised to get civil affairs goods out and on the way rapidly; the goods were needed by the Europeans, and they took up a lot of room at the ports. The system of obtaining tonnage allotment from U.K. had never been satisfactory, for the services had shipped in excess of bids, with the result that the ports had been obliged to handle some unneeded goods, but for April movement the services were promising lists of necessary tonnages, with exact times, and destinations. All things considered, the April program of 177 ships, 76 for Marseilles and the remainder for the North, was believed to be

well within [illegible]ilities.

The Supply Program and the Railroads

Discharge of ships was dependent upon the prompt clearance of port areas, and the efficient use of railway equipment had a great deal to do with port clearance. Troop trains could do their bit toward making the cargo targets difficult of attainment. There also was the problem of delayed return of rail cars to the ports.

Colonel Murrill's visit to Belgium early in February convinced him that three factors contributed mainly to the poor turnaround time on rail cars. There was congestion of lines due to loaded cars backing up at depots and yards, so that tracks and sidings designed to facilitate operation of trains were used for storage. Congestion was due also to a general shortage of locomotives and crews; the cars backed up because the switching facilities at depots were inadequate. Furthermore, the services were not unloading the cars promptly at depots.

It was possible in late February to plan for the greater use of Rouen in the March program, because rail was available on both sides of the Seine. The east bank's lines led directly to the northern French and Belgian depots, while the west side tracks gave quick access to Paris, or via Le Manoir Bridge to the regions eastward.

Careful car-spotting, loading and moving schedules, which had speeded port clearance, were needed to improve out-movement at depots also. If this could be effected, there would be less reconsignment of cars. Comzone Headquarters had granted the OCOT's request to forbid the reconsignment of more than 10 cars daily at any depot without the speci-

fic authority of the Transportation Officer. The request had been supported by reports drawn up by a representative of the MRS, showing the wasted mileage resulting from reconsignments. The 10-car limit did not apply, however, to cars reconsigned directly to a forward depot for the Armies, since delivering cargo to the troops was the T.C.'s chief aim.

In an informal chat which followed a Supply Movement Conference in March, the Chief, Belgian Branch, Control and Planning Division, OCOT, was warned by the Ghent Transportation Officer that his April port commitments could not be met if the existing car conditions continued. Depots had been unable to unload, and so were embargoed, with the result

loaded cars destined for them were filling up yards and sidings.

so congested the lines that it was difficult to move out empty cars. The Ghent representative requested that embargoed cars be stored at stations and yards well away from the port. G-4, Comzone, was greatly concerned about the steadily-increasing backlog at the port, but there would be little purpose in loading supplies on cars which the services could not unload at depots. By the end of March, however, a more optimistic note was sounded for later programs, for the Allied advance into Germany had been so rapid, that many rail lines were found in comparatively good condition.

The optimistic note on the condition of th railroads n Germany also applied to other forms of theater transportation. Coupled with the successful programming of incoming shipments and the f rward movement of equipment and supplies, particularly the cargo ovement to the Armies by the XYZ motor transport operation the exist of a dequate amount of inland transport insured satisfactory rt for the ad-

vance of the combat forces. The contrast is striking between the lack of transportation facilities and the improvised planning of September 1944 when the U.S. Armies confronted the Siegfried Line, and the availability of such facilities, with appropriate plans and preparations for their effective use, in the final push to a junction with the Russian forces in the spring of 1945. The contrasting circumstances emphasize the necessity for a flexible and adequate delivery service in support of a fast moving Army if it is to take advantage of its opportunities. A large share of the credit for creating such a service in the ETO by 1945, is due to the theater T.C., particularly after it was invested with the needed authority, and the results of its efforts were fully evident by V-E Day.